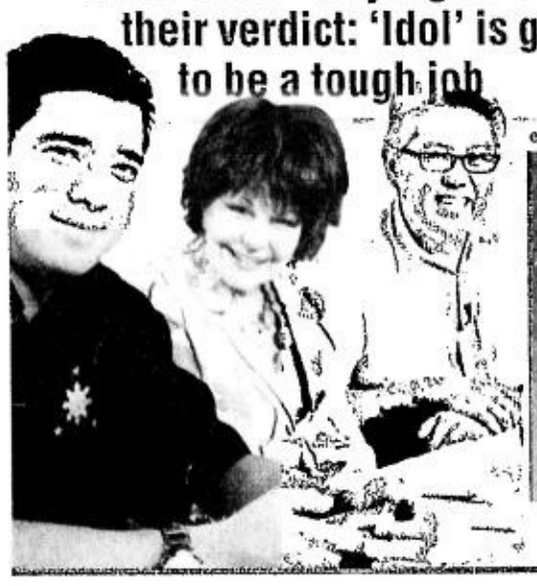
■ ENTERTAINMENT / A2-1
Here come 'da judges' and their verdict: 'Idol' is going to be a tough job



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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER Sunday

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Sunday, June 11, 2006 ★★ 12 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 183 P18 website: www.inq7.net

From Mozart to Marley: Surgery gets a soundtrack

SCALPEL, SUTURE, IPOD. Like most of modern life, surgery has acquired a soundtrack, whether Sinatra or Vivaldi, Mozart or Bob Marley, "La Boheme" or the Beatles. Surgeons say it relaxes them, focuses their atten-

FROM MOZART/ A8

Gov't must pay Leo's kin

SC 'error' on Echegaray execution sparks call for compensation

By Juliet Labog-Javellana and Armand Nocum

FOR PLAYING GOD, the government must pay.

In what could be the most expensive "I am sorry" gesture the government could make, Senate Minority Leader and anti-death penalty advocate Aquilino Pimentel Jr. yesterday suggested an amount of between P5 million and P10 million as compensation to the family of Leo Echegaray for his "wrongful death."

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez appeared to agree but mentioned no specific amount.

"The family of Echegaray may be entitled to compensation," Gonzalez said. But he added the matter should be studied carefully lest the families of six other convicts who were put to death also seek compensation.

"They may be considered to be a victim of wrongful violence ... If you consider the fact that no less than the Chief Justice talks about that, boy! That carries a lot of marbles ... and you cannot see the CJ speaking out of his hat," Gonzalez said.

Pimentel and Gonzalez were reacting to a statement by Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban, who said in a recent speech before members of the Free Legal Assistance Group that Echegaray might have been the victim of an "erroneous execution."

Echegaray was executed by lethal injection in 1999 after the Supreme Court affirmed his death sentence. He had been convicted of raping the 10-year-old daughter of his common-law wife.

He was one of seven people convicted of heinous crimes and executed under the revived death penalty law, which Congress has decided to scrap.

Pimentel and Sen. Edgardo Angara said in interviews that there should be a law granting compensation to families of people who suffer wrongful deaths at the hands of the state or its agents.

Pimentel said he planned to file such a bill because the Philippines did not have such a law. He said there could even be a specific measure for the grant of monetary compensation to Echegaray's family.

"If Echegaray's was really a

GOV'T/ A4

EL MER CATO/PHILIPPINE MISSION

RP BASH IN BIG APPLE: New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg (second from right) hailed the contribution of Fil-Ams to the United States in his message during the annual Philippine Independence Day parade held last Sunday along Madison Avenue in Manhattan. From left are Ambassador Lauro L. Baja, the Philippines' permanent representative to the United Nations; Consul General Cecilia Rebong; Isagani Puertollano, chair, Philippine Independence Day Committee, and Dan de Guzman, grand marshall of this year's parade.

NYC mayor joins Filipinos in early Freedom Day fete

By Rita Villadiego
Contributor

NEW YORK CITY—A SEA OF FILIPINOS marked the 108th Philippine Independence Day celebration here on June 4.

It was a great day for members of more than 135 Filipino organizations who flocked to Madison Avenue to send a message of unity, pride and love of country.

The festival, which was attended by New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg, is believed to be the largest celebration of Philippine independence outside the Philippines.

And the scene was memorable, with floats bearing beauty queens and red, white and blue balloons moving along, young Filipino-Americans dancing with wands of flowers, and marching music blaring.

All these as the crowd cheered wildly, the smell of barbecue filled the air, and New

NYC MAYOR/ A8

Unsung hero of independence: Jose Rizal's big brother Paciano

By Chris Antonette Piedad-Pugay
National Historical Institute

THE PHILIPPINES IS A CRADLE OF heroes—great men and women, many of whom are immortalized, and a number of them unrecognized and unsung.

One of the latter was Paciano Rizal, a general of the Philippine Revolution who struggled and sacrificed for both family and country, but who, more often than not, is identified in history books only as the elder brother of national hero Jose "Pepe" Rizal.

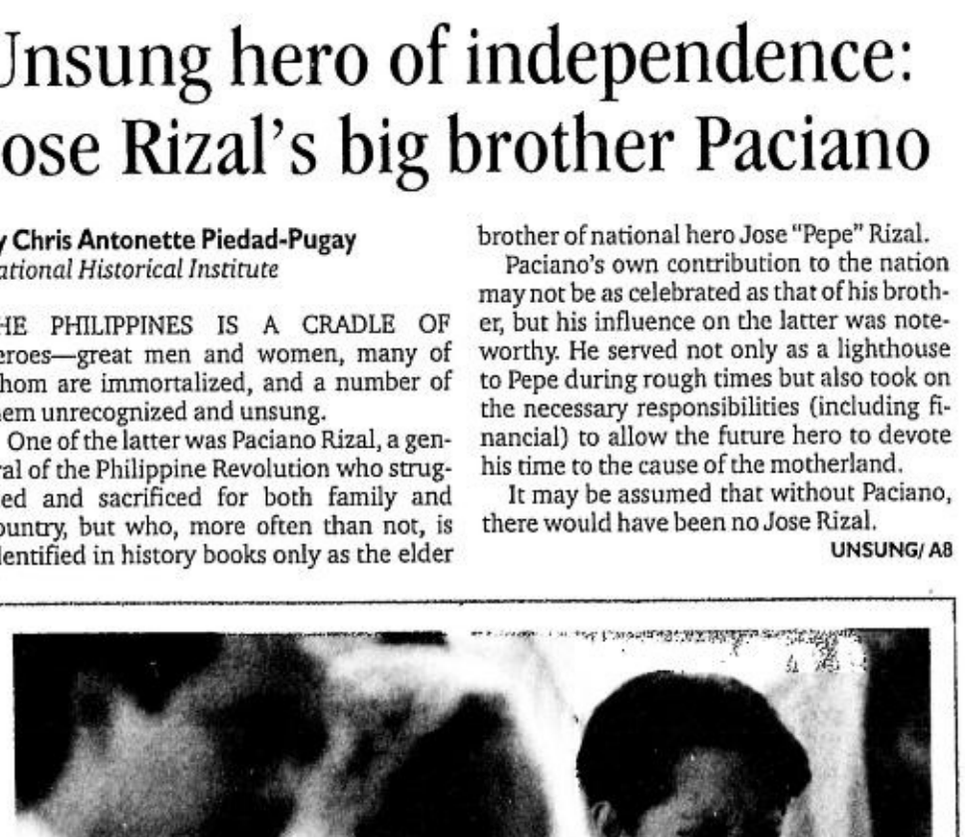
Paciano's own contribution to the nation may not be as celebrated as that of his brother, but his influence on the latter was noteworthy. He served not only as a lighthouse to Pepe during rough times but also took on the necessary responsibilities (including financial) to allow the future hero to devote his time to the cause of the motherland.

It may be assumed that without Paciano, there would have been no Jose Rizal.

UNSUNG/ A8

BOY CABRIDO

BEAUTY ON THE ROCKS: A river snakes between two cliffs which is just one entrancing scene found in Sagada, Mountain Province. The cleavage in the rocks affords a good view of the modern infrastructure built to facilitate travel to Sagada which is a most favored destination for local and foreign nature lovers.



SLEEPING ON THE JOB? *That* President Arroyo can't be accused of doing. For sure, she's been a tireless, sleepless Chief Executive night and day. But she has her moments when she can't suppress a yawn as she stands as a principal sponsor at the wedding of Michael de la Cruz and Ellen Pilar Sebastian, who are both lawyers, at St. Joseph Parish Church in Zamboanga City on Saturday. EDWIN BACASMAS

'Why now? Will it bring him back?'

By Norman Bordadora and Jerome Aning

LIFE HAS MOVED ON FOR SOME OF the key players in the Leo Echegaray tragedy. Even the 10-year-old girl he was convicted of raping has now built a family of her own. Why bring back the past?

Seven years after the house painter Echegaray became the first man in the Philippines in a long while to be executed by lethal injection, why did Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban have to raise the issue all over again?

"Why? Will it change anything? Will they be able to bring him back?" the dead man's sister, Leonor Echegaray, said in an interview with the INQUIRER yesterday at her home in Barangay San Antonio, Quezon City.

Leonor was reacting to Panganiban's statement that Echegaray's execution in 1999 might have been the result of a "judicial error."

Leonor said Echegaray's eight surviving siblings would discuss among themselves what steps to take in the wake of Panganiban's remarks that Leo could have gotten life imprisonment instead of the irreversible penalty of death via a cocktail of lethal fluids.

With Panganiban's admission serving no practical purpose in their lives, Leonor said it would have been better had it not been made at all.

"They should not have brought it up after all these years," she said. "We've suffered enough. Whenever the name Echegaray is mentioned, people laugh behind our backs," she said, teary eyed.

Leonor was referring to the stigma that was attached to the family by the rape case, which resulted in her brother also becoming the first person to be

WHY/ A4

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

SUNDAY, JUNE 11, 2006

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WEATHER FORECAST

Extreme Northern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms mostly in the afternoon or evening.

COMPILED BY MEL DE GUZMAN, PDI RESEARCH/06/10/06 SOURCE PAGASA

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Rains
Calapan	Rains	Davao	Rains

Bulusan rumblings getting stronger

By Niño Jesus Orbeta, Bobby Labalan and Ephraim Aguilar
PDI-Southern Luzon Bureau

SORSOGON CITY—BULUSAN VOLCANO EXPLODED TWICE more early yesterday, spewing columns of ash and steam at least one kilometer into the pre-dawn sky and blanketing at least five villages with up to one-and-a-half inches of ash, officials said.

Volcanologist Abner Ete said the explosions, which came at 12:18 a.m. Saturday and again 11 minutes later, were weaker than last Wednesday's episode but warned that the frequency of the ash emissions indicated more were coming.

Bulusan, one of the country's most active volcanoes, has had at least six ash-and-steam explosions since March 21, and authorities have begun distributing facial masks to residents of villages downwind from the 1,565-meter volcano.

The news agency AFP reported the Office of Civil Defense in Quezon City as saying a 57-year-old local man died of asthma triggered by the volcanic ashfall.

Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology has maintained the alert status at Level 2, which means that no one is allowed within an area four kilometers from the volcano's summit. At Level 3 an explosion is considered possible, at Level 4 it is seen as likely and at Level 5 an eruption has occurred with lava flows or ash columns reaching 6 km.

Most affected places

Officials said the places most affected by yesterday's ash falls were Barangays Escuala and Inlagadian in Casiguran and Barangays San Isidro, Sta. Barbara, Buhang and Purog in Bulusan.

The Phivolcs has warned that areas to the east and northeast of the volcano should expect more ash showers in light of the prevailing winds, although other areas could also be affected. It also warned people living near streams and rivers against the danger of lahar flows, which could happen when rainwater mixes with ash deposited on the volcano's slopes.

8,000 masks distributed

In Casiguran town, the Municipal Disaster Coordinating Council distributed about 8,000 masks to residents following yesterday's explosions. Mayor Edwin Hamor said Barangays Escuala and Inlagadian, which lie about four kilometers from the volcano, were severely affected by ash falls of up to one-and-one-half inches thick.

Casiguran police chief Romualdo Pesonila said police had to direct traffic on the Maharlika Highway because of poor visibility even hours after day had broken.

Classes have been suspended since Thursday in at least four barangays of the town and evacuation centers readied in the event Phivolcs raised the alert to Level 3.

Meanwhile, Malacañang said yesterday it had ordered all disaster-related agencies to step up their preparations for an imminent eruption.

Longer preparation time

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, in an interview with dzXL radio, said President Macapagal-Arroyo wanted the National Disaster Coordinating Council and relief agencies to gear up even before Bulusan erupts to ensure minimal loss of life and property.

"We want to have a longer preparation time for this because we want to have a quicker reaction time. We want to avoid any untoward incidents should Mount Bulusan erupt," Ermita said, noting that the President has been monitoring the situation since last week.

Ermita said the government has prepared the funds for possible relief activities in the area through the NDCC and that the President has authorized the Sorsogon provincial government to utilize five percent of its budget for disaster relief.

No significant development

Phivolcs Director Renato Solidum told the INQUIRER that no other significant development had taken place following Saturday's explosions.

"Alert Level 2 remains in effect. This means similar explosions could still happen," Solidum said.

Phivolcs, in its 8 a.m. bulletin on Mt. Bulusan, said the explosion produced an ash and steam cloud which rose to about a kilometer above the volcano's summit and drifted generally towards the northeast and east mainly affecting barangays San Isidro, Sta. Barbara, Buang and Purog in Bulusan town.

"The initial ash explosion was recorded by all monitoring stations around the volcano although no volcanic earthquake preceded the explosion event," the bulletin read. *With reports from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr., Norman Bordadora and INQUIRER wires*

MORNING AFTER. Although classes have been suspended, these children of Barangay Escuala, Casiguran, Sorsogon, venture out of their homes despite the haze of volcanic ash that continues to envelop the locality hours after yesterday's two ash-and-steam explosions of Mount Bulusan a few kilometers way. NIÑO JESUS ORBETA

Palace: Another excuse to Cha-cha

THE ITCH TO CHA-CHA JUST WON'T go away.

Yesterday, Malacañang found another excuse to push President Macapagal-Arroyo's bid to have the Constitution amended.

This time Malacañang cited Congress's failure to pass the 2006 budget as the best argument to abandon the presidential form of government and shift to a parliamentary system as espoused by Charter change advocates.

"We lament the nonpassage of vital reform bills to include the national budget due to the noncooperation and dilly-dallying displayed by the Senate. This situation is the clearest and best argument for a shift to a unicameral system that fuses the executive and legislative powers in one chamber for which we now have a growing momentum of public support," said Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye in a statement.

Congress adjourned its session last week without approving the first trillion-peso budget at the bicameral conference committee after the Senate stood pat on its decision to cut government outlays by more than P60 billion this year.

Malacañang has taken an all-or-nothing stance on the budget with the President refusing to call a special session and opting for a reenacted 2005 budget rather than a scaled-down 2006 budget.

Aside from the budget, Bunye heaped plenty of the blame on the Senate.

"The gridlock caused by the Senate has hindered confidence in our economy, stunted opportunities for growth with social equity and hampered the pursuit of national security because of several key pieces of legislation that are gathering dust in the upper chamber," said Bunye.

But while it has not hidden its desire to change the Constitution, Malacañang itself remains unclear on when the changes would take effect.

In an interview over dzXL radio, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said the Palace was preparing for the holding of regular elections in 2007 unless an interim parliament was established before this period.

"If ever (the interim parliament) is in place, it is the only one which can declare whether to postpone or push through with the 2007 elections," Ermita said.

Ermita said that unless the mode of Charter change—through a constitutional convention or constitutional assembly or people's initiative—had been set, it would be difficult to say when an interim parliament would be established. *Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*

Antiterror units called in to hunt bombing suspects

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

MALACAÑANG YESTERDAY ORDERED THE government's antiterror units to go after the perpetrators of the bomb attacks in Batangas and Pampanga that nearly killed a provincial governor and targeted a key supporter of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Police have so far not identified the suspects in the bomb attacks on Batangas Gov. Armando Sanchez that killed two of his aides and on the house of Rodolfo "Bong" Pineda in Lubao, Pampanga.

The Palace order has raised questions of whether both Pineda and Sanchez were the targets of terrorist attacks. Both had been linked in the past to the illegal numbers game "jueteng." Both had denied the accusations.

"These things (bomb attacks on Sanchez and Pineda) are covered SOP (standard operating procedure) by police and security agencies in the antiterrorism task force established by the President in March 2003," said Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita in an interview over dzXL radio.

Ermita noted that he was the chair of the antiterror task force at its inception two years ago as then defense secretary.

"I am still chairman (of the task force) and the national coordinator is National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales. Our role is to build up our intelligence information so that these things will not happen," Ermita said.

The bomb attacks on Sanchez and Pineda, which occurred eight days apart, raised speculation there was a turf war among the country's gambling lords. But police officials were quick to deny this.

In the wake of the bomb attacks, Ermita said he had ordered the antiterror task force to beef up its intelligence network at the local level.

"We want to encourage our countrymen to help us gather information on bomb attacks like [the ones on] Governor Sanchez and Mr. Pineda," Ermita said.

Ermita was also quick to dismiss claims that the bomb attacks and the rise in criminal activity were an offshoot of President Arroyo's decision to abolish the death penalty.

"They always say that. But even when we had the death penalty, which was supposed to sow fear among would-be criminals, there were still plenty of people who commit heinous crimes," said Ermita.

CORY IN MACAU. Former President Corazon Aquino recently attended the annual celebration of the Feast of Our Lady of Fatima in Macau. Chief Executive Edmund Ho received Aquino at his official residence and gave her a souvenir of Macau's famous landmark, the Ruins of the Church of St. Paul.

Subic-Clark road 1/3 complete

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO – AT LEAST 30 percent of the Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway (SCTEX) has been completed and the delay in construction is being addressed to finish the P21-billion road by December 2007, a Bases Conversion Development Authority official said.

Narciso Abaya, BCDA president, detailed the project's progress in a statement as Pampanga Gov. Mark Lapid and other local officials on Friday inspected the 31-km stretch of road between Angeles City and Mabalacat, Porac and Floridablanca towns.

The road, which will span a total 93.77 km, will be carved through mountains and lahar canyons from Dinalupihan town in Bataan to Tarlac City.

Construction of the Subic-Clark and Clark-Tarlac segments are 27 percent and 35 percent complete, respectively, Abaya said.

The Kajima-Obayashi-JFE Engineering-Mitsubishi Heavy Industries joint venture has installed 52 of the 58 drainage systems and drilled 695 of 755 bored piles along the Subic-Clark section.

The Hazama-Taisei-Nippon Steel joint venture has fitted the first steel girder at the 1.16-km Sacobia-Bamban Bridge, the longest of four bridges on the expressway.

It is set to begin the construction of the toll operation center at Barangay Cacutud in Mabalacat.

Abaya said the BCDA and the Toll Regulatory Board were still negotiating on the rates to be charged road users.

Army officials have reported deploying at least 300 soldiers to guard the heavy equipment and construction workers at more than 50 work sites. Reporters saw heavily armed troops along the mountain routes.

Lapid said he hoped the project would be "done on time." This way, he said, the economic benefits of connecting the Clark Special Economic Zone, the Subic Bay Freeport and the Luisita Industrial Park would "be felt by the residents through jobs and other livelihood opportunities."

The road links the three industrial centers covering Zambales, Bataan, Pampanga and Tarlac provinces where some seven million people live.

The four-lane highway aims to boost the potential of Subic and Clark to be the leading transshipment hub in Southeast Asia. The two former United States military bases have two airports, a seaport and a combined land area of nearly 80,000 hectares between them.

During the inspection, Floridablanca Mayor Darwin Manalastas asked the BCDA to consider funding the rehabilitation of municipal and barangay roads that were damaged when they were used as access routes to the project sites.

Gov't to address flooding on Boracay

THE PHILIPPINE TOURISM AUthority yesterday said work was underway to develop a comprehensive drainage system for Boracay to prevent flooding in the island-beach resort.

PTA general manager Robert Dean Barbers said the persistent flooding in Boracay's low-lying areas had become a major problem. He blamed it on the uncontrolled construction of hotels and resorts that did not strictly comply with the existing building code and local ordinances.

Barbers raised the issue with local government officials and other tourism stakeholders on the island during a recent dialogue on President Macapagal-Arroyo's order to the PTA to exercise administrative control over Boracay and improve its facilities to make it a truly world-class.

Barbers said he was "very optimistic" all the stakeholders would support the flood project.

The project, he said, involves the installation of a state-of-the art drainage system with a pumping station to prevent flooding on the island.

Present at the meeting were Aklan Gov. Carlitos Marquez, Rep. Florencio Miraflores, Malay Mayor Ceciron Cawaling, Vice Mayor Fromie Bautista, Connie Padilla of the "Eminent Persons Group," community leaders and hotel owners.

The PTA chief said the President instructed him to oversee the development of Boracay in order to realize the island's optimum tourism potential and, at the same time, make sure the environment was protected.

"The President is very much concerned about the future of Boracay," he said. *Jerome Aning*

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'Gods of Padre Faura not infallible after all'

By Armand N. Nocum

THE "GODS OF PADRE FAURA" do err.

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez yesterday said Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban's admission that there could have been a "judicial error" in the conviction and execution of Leo Echegaray proved that Supreme Court justices were not infallible.

"The admission of the Chief Justice that more or less the Supreme Court made a mistake in putting to death rape convict Leo Echegaray proves what I have been saying all along—that the findings of our justices are not perfect," Gonzalez said in a telephone interview from Iloilo.

Gonzalez has time and again questioned the wisdom of the high court's justices, especially following their ruling on the unconstitutionality of key provisions of Malacanang's edicts declaring a state of emergency, barring the appearance of government officials in congressional hearings, and the implementation of the "calibrated pre-emptive response" policy, which allowed police to break up street protests.

No place in the sky

In a May 31 speech during the launch of the Free Legal Assistance Group's publication "Legal Reference on Capital Cases," Panganiban said the court should have downgraded Echegaray's death sentence to life imprisonment and that capital punishment "has no place in our legal firmament."

Panganiban's admission, Gonzalez said, showed that in spite of the safeguards put in place to stop wrongful executions, "due process of law was breached" in Echegaray's case.

But then, he said it may be "better to err on the side of life."

No perfect justice

He also said that history would show that there "is no perfect justice" and that even the Catholic Church hierarchy and the architects of the French Revolution committed lots of abuses.

But he expressed surprise at Panganiban's decision to take issue with his colleagues on Echegaray's execution.

"His statement surprised me. I think the Chief Justice wants to tell the whole world that he is in favor of the abolition of the death penalty ... and that sometimes the court can make mistakes," Gonzalez said.

Just looking at stats

Such a move, he said, would put a human face to the occupants of the Supreme Court building in Padre Faura, Manila, who have been referred to sometimes as "gods" for their power to determine who lived and died, and who have the last say on legal disputes.

Supreme Court spokesperson Ismael Khan said the court never pretended to be infallible. He also brushed aside criticisms that Panganiban had undermined the credibility of the court and his colleagues with his statement.

"It's not as if he wanted to undermine the court's ruling on Echegaray, he is simply looking at the statistics," he said.

Statistics show that in 64 percent of death convictions reviewed, the penalties were downgraded either to life imprisonment or to lower penalties.

Gov't must pay Leo's relatives

From page A1

wrongful execution, the government should pay his family an arbitrary amount of P5 million to P10 million as compensation," Pimentel said.

Gonzalez said there could still be a correction of the judicial error if Echegaray's family availed of the provisions of the "compensation law for the innocent victims of crime."

However, he said that compensation might not be easy to obtain.

'Analogy is clear'

"In securing compensation for the victims of crime, literally you must be a victim of a crime, but here you cannot say Echegaray was a victim of a crime because he was convicted," Gonzalez said of Echegaray's case.

"The analogy is quite clear. He committed a crime but he need not have died."

But beyond seeking compensation, Gonzalez doubted Echegaray's family could get anything from the government for the supposed error of executing Echegaray.

Asked whether the Echegaray heirs could sue the government, Gonzalez said: "I don't think they can bring an action against the government ... I don't think you can do that because the state is non-suable."

Neither can they go after the justices because the "performance of their duty is presumed to be regular," Gonzalez said.

Angara said Panganiban's statement could "shake the people's faith in the judiciary" and that the doubt he created in the court's decision on Echegaray must be resolved.

"Whether it's valid or not, it should not be left hanging," Angara said in a phone interview.

Angara said that in the absence of a law compensating victims of wrongful deaths in the Philippines, the government should compensate Echegaray's family ex-gracia, or out of generosity.

Not court's fault

"What can be done here is the justice secretary can recommend to the President to grant monetary compensation," Angara said.

Senate Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan, original author of a bill abolishing the death penalty, said the failure to present evidence in court that Echegaray was not the parent of his victim was "not the fault of the court."

"There may be no legal obligation on the part of the state to provide compensation to the family of Echegaray for his 'wrongful' death but in the light of the statement of the Chief Justice, there may be a moral obligation on the part of the state to provide some form of relief," Pangilinan said.

"Considering that this is a novel case without legal precedent, the lawyers of the family of Echegaray may have to bring the matter to court and argue for the granting of such a relief, if any may be available," he said.

Angara said many states in the United States had laws requiring the state to compensate victims of wrongful deaths.

"If you take one's life wrongly, you must compensate," he said.

He said such cases applied not only to those erroneously subjected to the death penalty but also to victims of "gang-style killings" by the police or military authorities.

Angara, however, has no plans of filing a wrongful death compensation bill. He said the courts and the government would be besieged by victims' relatives claiming compensation.

Reacting to an INQUIRER story which stated that Panganiban voted to affirm Echegaray's death conviction, Supreme Court spokesperson Ismael Khan said that Panganiban—along with Associate Justices Reynato Puno and Jose Vitug—voted against it in keeping with his position that the death penalty law was unconstitutional.

Khan also said it was not only now that Panganiban had expressed his views about alleged errors in the execution of Echegaray, having written about the issue in his books "Leadership by Example" in 1999 and "Battles in the Supreme Court" in 1998.

Panganiban has said that, although the complaint against Echegaray alleged that the victim was his daughter, it was not proved during the trial that he was either the father or stepfather, or even grandfather, of the girl, which would make his crime heinous and punishable by death.

Thus, Panganiban said, Echegaray should not had been executed but meted out life imprisonment.

In its 1996 ruling affirming Echegaray's conviction, the high court concluded that he was "either the father or stepfather" of the girl based on the fact that she called him "Papa" and that he had provided for her food, shelter and education.

A copy of the court's decision showed that Panganiban concurred in it.

"He is now in the Great Beyond, and a correction of the judicial error can no longer resurrect him. I believe that the surreal outcome of this case reinforces the strongest reason why the death penalty has no place in our statute books," said Panganiban, a known opponent of capital punishment.

Echegaray was sentenced to death by Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 104 on Sept. 7, 1994. He was convicted of the rape of his "daughter."

During the trial, Echegaray alleged his wife's lover, not he, was the father of the victim.

'Why now ? Will it bring ...

From page A1

executed under the country's revived death penalty law.

"The issue should have stopped immediately when it started," Leonor said, meaning the rape case against her brother should not have been filed at all.

Old wounds reopened

Martin Dino, chair of the barangay where the Echegarays live and one of the guardians of Leo's victim—known as "Baby"—during the rape trial, said that Panganiban's admission would only open wounds that had already healed.

"The Echegaray family has moved on," Dino said.

He said that Baby's own relations with the Echegaray family had improved.

Now in her 20's, Baby already has a young family of her own, Dino said, adding that she still lived in the same neighborhood as Leo's four siblings—her aunts and uncles—as well as Leonor.

Fences mended

Dino said he himself had somehow already mended fences with the Echegarays, including Leo's brother Hector, who was the family spokesperson when Leo was about to be executed in 1999.

Barangay officers told the INQUIRER that Hector had also resumed working on barangay projects, with Dino still at the helm.

Leonor said her family had been active in barangay programs, their activities disrupted only when Leo was involved in the rape case and the barangay took an aggressive stand to protect Baby and help prosecute her rapist.

SC should be 'answerable'

"Baby and the others have already healed. Hector and I have also come to terms," Dino said.

Dino said that if the Supreme Court made a mistake in Leo's case, "they should be made answerable."

Dino is an official of the private watchdog Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption and a staunch advocate of the death penalty.

Conceding the futility of the death penalty law in curbing crime, both houses of Congress have passed separate measures scrapping capital punishment. A law finally abolishing it is expected to be signed by President Macapagal-Arroyo shortly before she leaves for the Vatican for an audience with Pope Benedict XVI.

Echegaray's chaplain

The abolition of capital punishment would benefit more than 1,000 inmates now on death row.

Panganiban has said that Echegaray should not have been executed but only meted out the penalty of life imprisonment because it was not proved during the trial that he was "a father, stepfather or grandfather" of Baby, which would have placed the rape under the category of "heinous crimes" punishable by death.

New Bilibid Prisons chaplain Msgr. Roberto Olaguer said that up to the day of his execution, Echegaray maintained that the girl was not his daughter.

"He swore that Baby was not his daughter and I can even bet my priesthood safely on that," Olaguer said in a phone interview.

An old story

Olaguer said the "judicial error" supposedly made by the Supreme Court in upholding Echegaray's death sentence was an old story, adding that he read about it in one of the books written by Panganiban when he was an associate justice of the Supreme Court.

"He can raise that issue now because he's already the Chief Justice, but I concur with his opinion," Olaguer said.

He said that all that could be done now was to pray for the late convict as well as reflect on and learn a lesson from his execution.

For one, he said, Congress's scrapping of the death penalty law reflected the people's view that executions were not a deterrent to crime.

Desire for revenge

"When Leo was killed, what pervaded was anger, hatred and [a desire] for revenge. But now we have shown ourselves to be civil and not barbaric in terms of administering justice," he said.

Echegaray, to his dying breath, maintained his innocence. During the trial, he said he was on a house-painting job at the time the rape was committed.

The defense also claimed Baby's grandmother influenced the victim to file the rape charge because the grandmother was interested in grabbing a property that Echegaray owned.

Olaguer said that while death convicts were happy about the scrapping of the death penalty, many were disappointed that their sentences had been reduced to life imprisonment without parole.

Serious flaws

"Those who maintain their innocence think it would now take longer for their cases to be reviewed... unlike before when death sentences were automatically reviewed by the Supreme Court," he said.

Catanduanes Rep. Joseph Santiago said the Supreme Court had been routinely downgrading to life in prison the death sentences on incestuous rape convicts in cases involving technical errors, such as a prosecutor's failure to cite the victim's minor age or the convict's exact relationship to the victim.

"In hindsight, it was obvious that serious procedural flaws attended Echegaray's arrest, trial and conviction," Santiago said.

He also said police records showed that when police arrested Echegaray at his residence in 1994, they had no arrest warrant and that Echegaray was hastily tried. *With a report from Philip C. Tubeza*

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Reyes: RP welfare uppermost in ruling

By Norman Bordadora

ENVIRONMENT SECRETARY ANGELO REYES yesterday said the country's welfare would be considered when the Department on Environment and Natural Resources decides whether or not to allow Lafayette Mining Corp. in Rapu-Rapu, Albay.

Reyes, who said the DENR would reveal its decision on Tuesday, said the fate of Lafayette's mining operations would not only be based on the technical and environmental studies submitted by the various stakeholders, including the Bastes Commission.

"The issue here is not just whether we will allow the Rapu-Rapu project to reopen or not based on technical and environmental considerations but we must also ensure that when we make a decision, the welfare of the Filipino people is taken into utmost consideration," Reyes said.

One of the Arroyo administration's main thrusts is the revitalization of the mining industry which is seen as a huge potential source of revenue to fuel the country's economic recovery.

The government, however, is also promoting responsible and sustainable mining operations to protect the country's resources and the environment.

"We have studied all the issues relative to the incidents and the mining operation, as well as the government response in terms of enforcing the rules and monitoring the project," Reyes said.

Reyes earlier said that the fate of Lafayette following the DENR study would send a strong signal about the government's policies to the entire mining industry and the environmental protection groups.

"We deeply appreciate the efforts of the (Bastes) Commission because they provided us with critical inputs that would help us form our decision," he said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo had formed a commission chaired by Sorsogon Bishop Arturo Bastes to look into the Rapu-Rapu mine spill incident.

The commission recommended a stop to Lafayette's operations in the area following the mine tailings spill that contaminated water bodies in the area.

Firm doing double duty faces tax rap

A CONSTRUCTION FIRM DOUBLING AS A garbage contractor has been charged with tax evasion after it allegedly duped the government of more than P35 million in taxes, the Bureau of Internal Revenue said yesterday.

BIR Commissioner Jose Mario Buñag said a tax evasion case has been filed in the Valenzuela City prosecutor's office against Dominus Construction and Services Corp. based in Mapulang Lupa, Valenzuela City.

"We found out it was also doing garbage collection and that it was paid by the Caloocan City government P58 million that it failed to declare," Buñag said. He made the announcement at the weekly Kapihan sa Sulo news forum yesterday.

The P58 million was not reflected in the income tax returns of either the company or of its owner and president, a certain Emilio de la Cruz. Valenzuela BIR officials said the omission constituted a gross violation of the Tax Code.

BIR Valenzuela Director Anselmo Adriano said surveillance showed Dominus dump trucks were hauling garbage and "other disposable stuff," not construction materials.

Further investigation showed the company was paid P58,578,653.41 by the Caloocan City government in 2004 for collecting garbage.

Revenue District Officer Ernesto de Vota said Dominus evaded payment of more than P35 million representing deficiency income, more than P5.9 million in value-added taxes and more than P5,000 in expanded withholding taxes. *Norman Bordadora*

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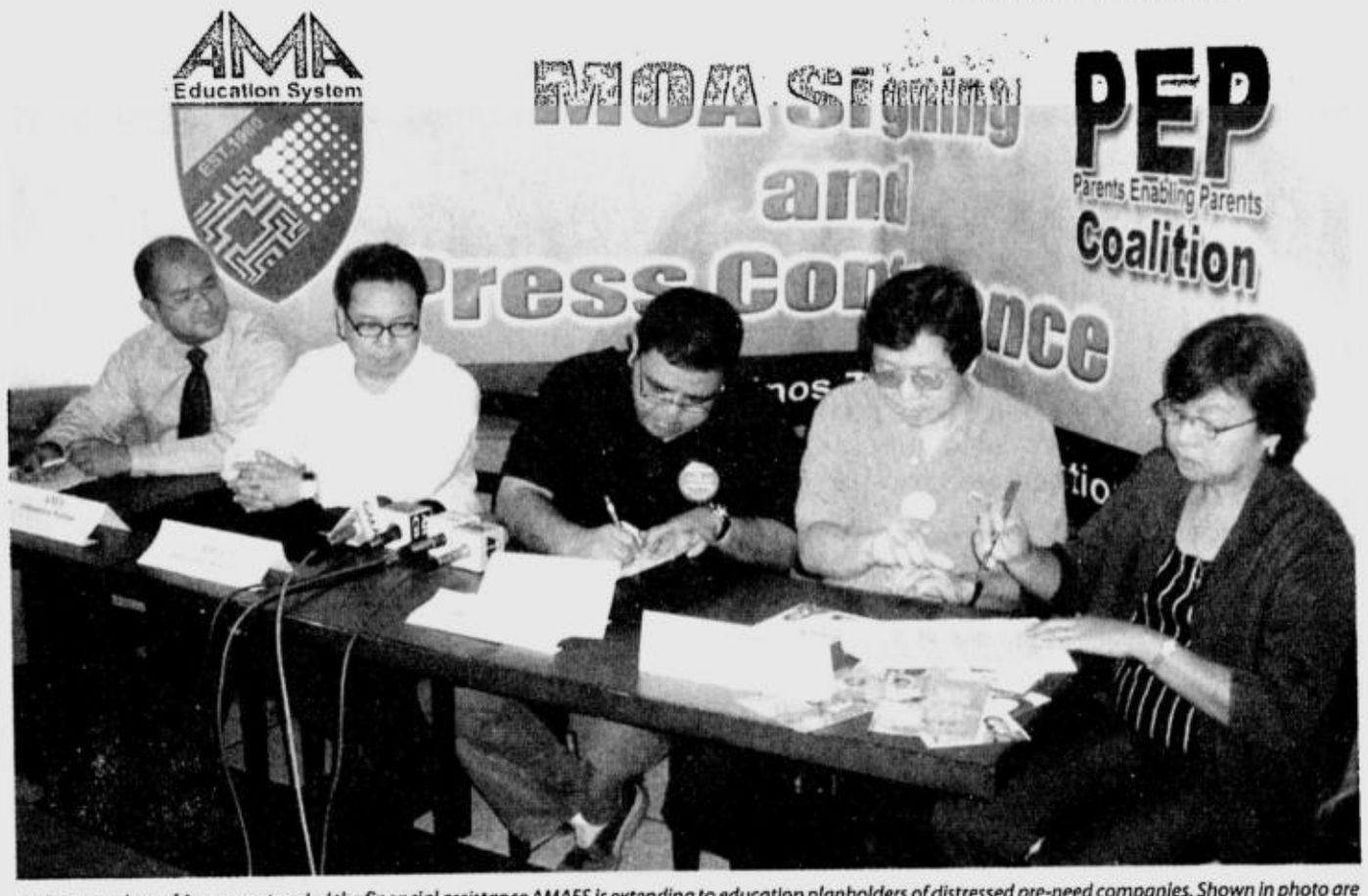

A Memorandum of Agreement sealed the financial assistance AMAES is extending to education planholders of distressed pre-need companies. Shown in photo are Ferdinand Sia, AMAES AVP for Marketing; Dr. Patrick Alain T. Azanza, SVP for Operations; Philip Piccio, PEP Coalition President; Vic Ortuoste, PEP Coalition Finance Head and Winnie Bonifacio, PEP Board Member.

Parents Enabling Parents (PEP) Coalition, a group of pre-need education planholders of various pre-need companies, sought the help of AMA Education System (AMAES). AMAES readily responded generously with a 50% financial assistance for any student going to any AMAES school on all fees from enrollment to graduation.

To qualify, a student must be a PEP Coalition member/dependent or a planholder of any pre-need company, and officially endorsed by PEP Coalition. Student must bring a photocopy of education plan and comply with AMAES admission requirements. If the 50% balance cannot be paid at the time of enrollment, AMAES can provide an Easy Payment Plan payable within an agreed time frame. ₱1,000 downpayment must be paid.

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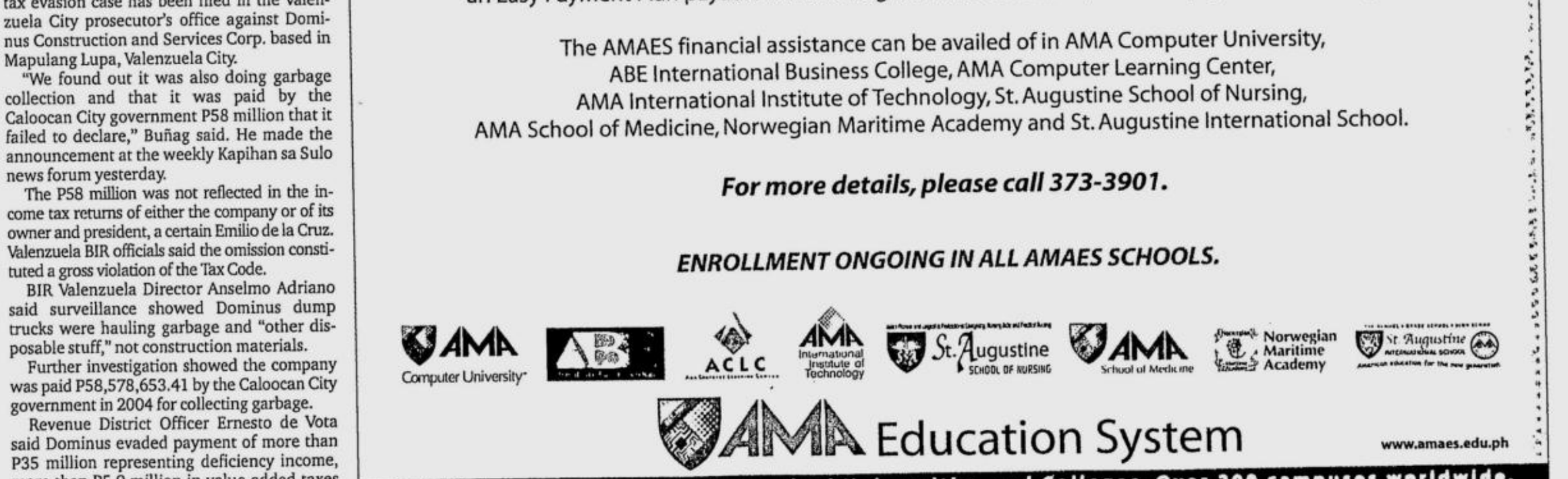


BATAK CHILDREN and some of their elders strike a first day of school pose outside their lone classroom that doubles as a health clinic and assembly hall. "Like lowlanders, Batak and Tagbanua natives have a passion for education," asserts their teacher, himself a first-time mentor.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Tribe proves you're never too old to learn

By Jerry E. Esplanada

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—THERE IS NO equivalent for the saying "Better late than never" in the Binatak dialect of the Batak tribe of Palawan.

BATAK mother and child await treatment at the schoolhouse cum health center.

But the grinning faces of 17-year-old Gerry Abordo and two of his almaciga–and wild honey–gathering buddies at the Batak settlement in the Mangapin rainforest here say it all.

"At long last, we're going to school. We'd really like to learn how to read and write like the others," Abordo said in Filipino.

The Batak native, who once thought education was a privilege of lowlanders and non-tribal folk, doesn't think he is "too old for either Grade I or Grade II. Our elders say age doesn't matter."

As a child, Abordo loved being read to by visiting missionaries, even if the stories mostly concerned religious matters.

He said it was the "komiks adventure stories which we enjoyed the most."

The new Mangapin Elementary School, a one-room concrete building which doubles as a health clinic and assembly hall, sits right in the middle of Mangapin, a settlement about 80 km north of the provincial capital which is home to members of the Batak and Tagbanua tribes.

Marcos Madamay, the Batak chieftain, said people in the settlement, both young and old, have been looking forward to the opening of school this month ever since they learned last year of the city government's plan to put up a school in their village.

"Like many lowlanders, Batak and Tagbanua natives have a passion for education," observed Rolly Badenas, 25, an education graduate of Fullbright College here. The Batak school is his first teaching assignment.

Badenas expects at least 52 incoming pupils for what he calls a "mixed Grades 1 to 4 class."

Boosting the literacy level of Palawan's indigenous communities is the dream of Mayor Edward S. Hagedorn.

Basic education is the right of every citizen, including the Batak, who are the poorest communities in Puerto Princesa, he said.

A congressional report has noted that the public education system has neglected the indigenous communities.

It cited several reasons for this: An inflexible schedule which fails to accommodate the economic activities of the pupils; curriculum and instructional materials which are irrelevant to the needs or cultural characteristics of the people; and teachers, generally from the lowlands, who are unfamiliar with the ways of life of cultural communities.

"The long distance is a major hindrance in advancing Batak literacy. Another factor is the inability of Batak families to meet the financial demands of basic education," according to "Bakas," a study of the Batak settlement in Cayasan published by TagBalay, a non-government environmental organization founded by Hagedorn.

Hagedorn had earlier set for himself a more difficult task: preventing the disappearance of the Batak.

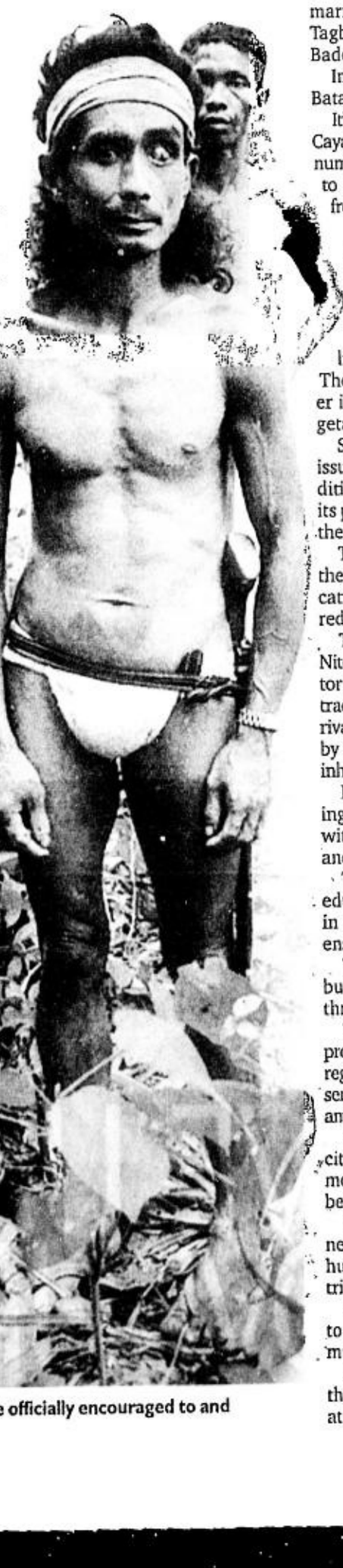
"For several decades now, the Bataks have been teetering on the edge of extinction," the mayor said.

Batak villages here are probably the only communities in the country where "making lots of babies" is officially encouraged and rewarded.

"Incentives, which include cash gifts, food, vegetable and fruit seeds, await participating couples," said Hagedorn.

The National Commission on Indigenous People has reported that "the high morbidity and mortality rates among the Batak are bringing them to the brink of extinction."

> Batak, both young and old, have been looking forward to the opening of school, says their chief Marcos Madamay



There are around 428 Bataks in Puerto Princesa, 56 less than the 1999 count, according to Roldan Parangue, who heads the NCIP in Palawan.

Aside from Mangapin, there are four other Batak settlements in the hinterlands north of the city: Tagnaya, Riandacan, Cayasan and Calacuasan.

The five villages sit on the slopes of the 1,593-meter peak Cleopatra's Needle, one of the natural landmarks of Palawan.

Of the five Batak settlements, only two—Mangapin and Riandacan—have registered slight population increases, said the NCIP.

From about 100 in the late 1990s, Bataks in Mangapin have grown to about 120.

However, of the 24 Batak families in the settlement, "only four can be considered pure Batak. The rest are products of intermarriages between Batak and Tagbanua and other tribes," said Badenas.

In Riandacan, there are 79 Bataks, from only 45 in 1999.

It's a different story in Tagnaya, Cayasan and Calacuasan where the number of Bataks has declined to to 52, 60 and 120, respectively, from 80, 115 and 140 in 1999.

The National Statistics Office 2000 census placed the Batak population in Palawan at 364.

The NCIP had proposed some years ago a P1.34 million action plan for the Batak. The program, however, was never implemented because of budgetary constraints.

Saving the tribe is as much an issue of restoring respect for traditional ways as it is of ensuring its physical survival, according to the Puerto Princesa government.

The TagBalay report stressed the need for a "non-formal education system that uses a cultural rediscovery strategy."

TagBalay project officer Marifi Nitor-Pablico wrote that a big factor in the disappearance of Batak traditional culture was the "the arrival, occupation and domination by the migrants over the sparsely inhabited ancestral lands."

Pablico also cited the increasing rate of Batak intermarriages with other indigenous groups and with migrants.

The city government is using education as a development tool in preserving Batak heritage and ensuring the tribe's survival.

This year, additional school buildings will be put up in two or three Batak barangays.

The city government has been providing Batak settlements on a regular basis with food aid, health services and non-formal education, among other support services.

Dr. Juancho Monserate, the city's health officer, said infant mortality among the Batak has been conquered.

But close monitoring is still necessary to prevent disease and hunger from further reducing the tribe's numbers, Monserate said.

Hagedorn said the campaign to save the Batak is still very much "a work in progress."

The Batak "need our help more than ever. They should be saved at all costs," he said.

THE BATAK are a vanishing tribe who are officially encouraged to and rewarded for making babies.

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We could've used gov't help, says Mt. Everest conqueror

LUCENA CITY—True,. there has been a deluge of accolades and attention from Malacañang down to the local governments. But mountaineer Leo Oracion, the first Filipino to scale Mt. Everest, feels he could have used some help before he embarked on his historic feat.

"We did not get any support from the government, even a single centavo. As a matter of fact, when we were already acclimatizing in Nepal preparing for the climb, Art Valdez (leader of the First Philippine Mt. Everest Expedition) was still looking for sponsors," Oracion revealed in an interview with the "Ang Balita Ngayon" program over the STV6 cable channel.

"But the experience has taught us that even without the support of the government, we can still stand and support ourselves," he said.

Fees

The permit to climb Mt. Everest costs around $70,000 for a minimum of seven people.

A commercial climb—where climbers pool their resources to make the ascent as a group—costs $65,000, inclusive of the fee for the Sherpa guides, food and oxygen.

The FPMEE-Everest expedition was sponsored by ABS-CBN, Asia Brewery's Summit, Globe and Kodak, among others.

Oracion became the first Filipino to reach the summit of Everest at an altitude of 29,035-ft on May 17. His teammate, Erwin "Pastour" Emata, followed the next day.

Romi Garduce, the third Filipino climber, reached the summit two days later.

Award

Quezon Gov. Wilfrido Enverga has bestowed on Oracion a Lifetime Achievement Award and a P150,000 cash gift from the provincial government.

Oracion is also being considered for the Quezon Medalya ng Karangalan, a list of honorees during the annual commemoration of the birth of the late President Manuel L. Quezon on Aug. 19.

On Wednesday, Oracion returned to his hometown of Lucban and received a royal welcome complete with brass bands, a parade and a motorcade around the town. A convoy of motorcycle and bike riders escorted the decorated float that he rode with his father.

Uniformed school children lined the motorcade route waving miniature Philippine flags.

The whole thing culminated in a lunch and ceremonial program in his honor at the municipal hall. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

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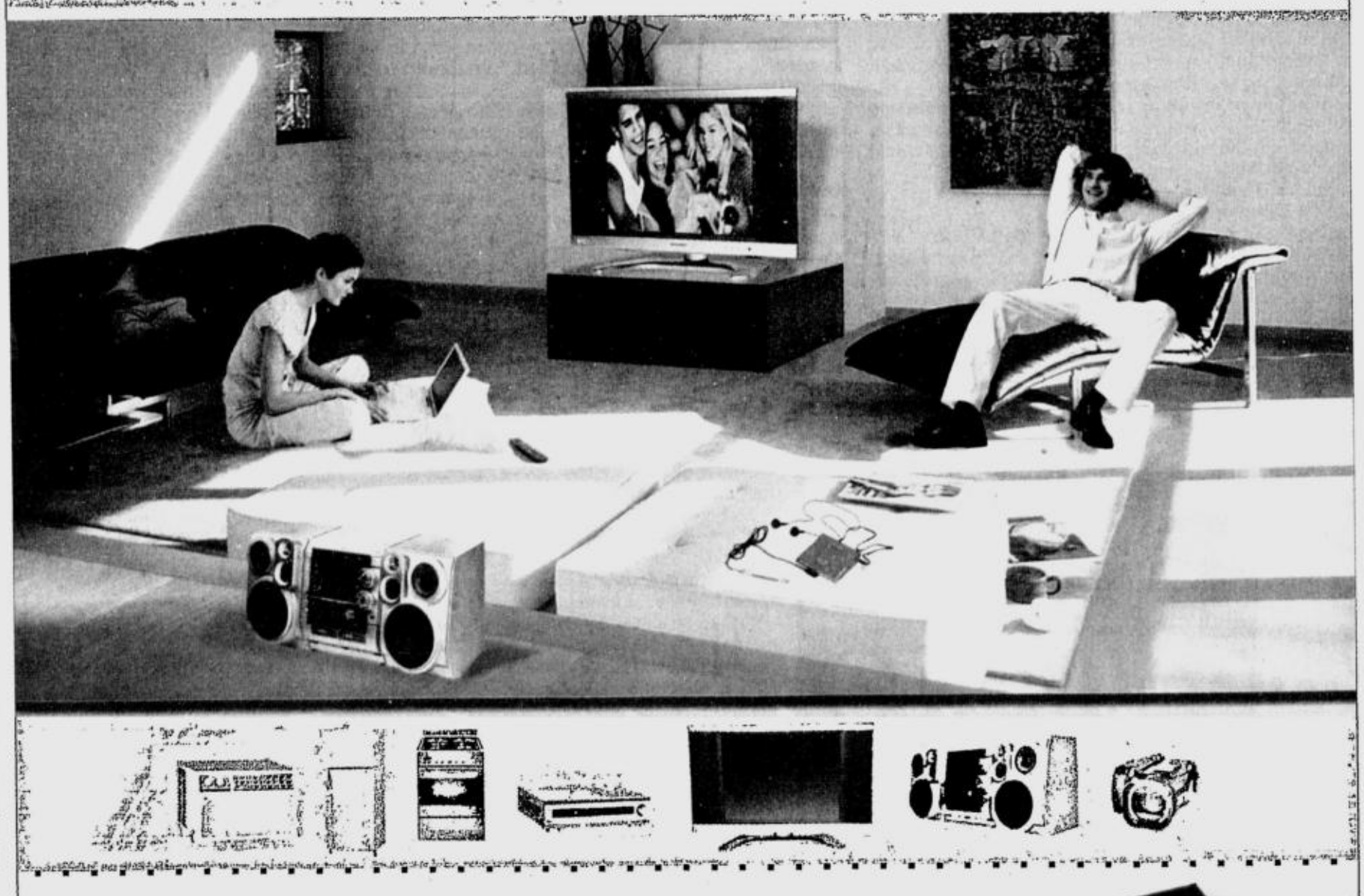

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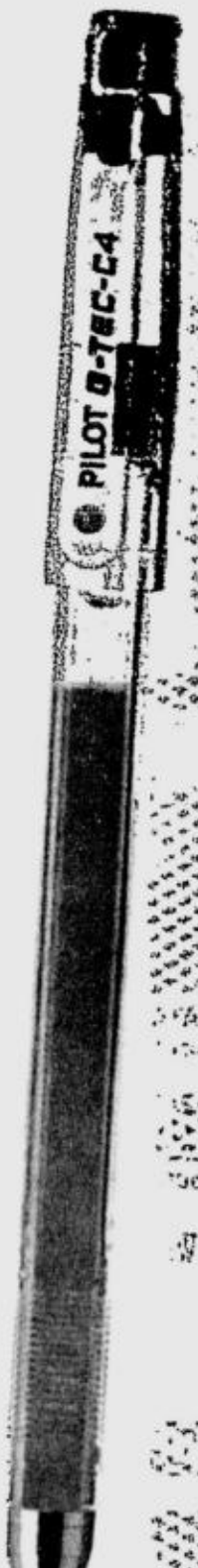

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Unsung hero of independence: Jose Rizal's big brother Paciano

From page A1

Paciano was born on March 7, 1851, in Calamba, Laguna, the second of the 11 children of Francisco Mercado and Teodora Alonso. (The Mercado family assumed the surname Rizal upon the hero's execution.)

Like Pepe, Paciano's first teacher was his mother, who taught him basic reading and writing, and praying. He was eventually sent to the town of Biñan, to learn more under the tutelage of Maestro Justiniano Aquino Cruz.

In time Paciano's parents sent him to pursue higher education in Manila, where he studied at the College of San Jose.

While in Manila, he lived and worked with Fr. Jose Burgos, one of the three martyr-priests implicated in the 1872 Cavite Mutiny. It was probably this close association with Burgos that shaped him into a vocal critic of the abuses of the Spanish friars.

Because of their parents' advanced age, Paciano was assigned to supervise Pepe's education.

He brought his younger brother to Biñan, also to study under Maestro Justiniano; and accompanied Pepe to Manila in 1872 and enrolled him at the Ateneo Municipal.

From Mercado to Rizal

It was the belief of most biographers of the national hero that Paciano was responsible for Pepe's use of the surname Rizal in place of Mercado.

The biographers believed that Paciano wanted Pepe to enjoy unencumbered a first-rate education, which would not have been possible had he used his real surname.

Paciano's strong connection with Burgos had made the friars and the Spanish authorities very suspicious of him. Ever the protective brother, he changed Pepe's surname to prevent the friars from discovering their affiliation.

As it turned out, Pepe was able to make the most of his student life at the Ateneo. Paciano also made sure that his brother's needs were taken care of.

In 1882, Pepe traveled to Spain to continue his medical studies there. A heavy task fell on Paciano's shoulders—to inform their parents of Pepe's departure and comfort them, and most importantly, to find the means to finance his brother's expenses abroad.

Helping the struggle

As a young student in Manila, Paciano saw the acts of injustice and cruelty committed by the friars. He decided to collect donations from people he knew to support the cause of secularization and to help Father Burgos in the latter's propaganda work.

In a letter to his brother dated May 26, 1882, Paciano said he was trying his best to help the Filipino struggle for reforms by ensuring that many of the people of Calamba were subscribing to Diariong Tagalog.

During this time, Paciano also encouraged Pepe to have his works published and sent him the money required.

He labored over translating "Noli Me Tangere" into Tagalog with Pepe's consent and guidance. (Unfortunately, this Tagalog version has been lost to posterity.)

In 1888, a land dispute cropped up in Calamba.

The Mercados prominently figured in the dispute, but they lost the case and were ejected from their home and lands.

The case did not end there. Paciano and four other people from Calamba were exiled to Mindoro, where they stayed from September 1890 until November 1891.

Shortly after returning home, Paciano was again exiled to Jolo, this time taking the place of his brother-in-law, Antonio Lopez.

Persecution

With the publication of Pepe's "Noli Me Tangere" in 1887 and "El Filibusterismo" in 1891, any affiliation with the author was like carrying a cross.

Each member of the family suffered persecution, and Paciano was no exception.

The heaviest sacrifice he made to protect his brother took place in December 1896, while Pepe was detained in Fort Santiago.

Not known to all, Paciano was arrested and subjected to severe torture in an attempt by the Spanish authorities to extract any statement that would link his brother to the clandestine struggle for independence.

The attempt failed. Paciano held his ground against the pain and humiliation inflicted by his torturers.

Family members later testified that when Paciano was returned to them, he was all but dead.

Revolutionary leader

His brutal experience in the hands of Spanish authorities, not to mention the fate that befell his brother, led Paciano to volunteer his services to Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo.

A day after Pepe's execution on Dec. 30, 1896, Paciano and his sisters traveled to Cavite to help the revolution in any way they could.

When the Spanish forces reclaimed Cavite, the revolutionary government headed by Aguinaldo retreated to Biak-na-Bato in Bulacan.

It was during this time that Pedro Paterno volunteered to serve as negotiator and succeeded in arranging a peace pact between the Spanish government and Aguinaldo's revolutionary government.

In compliance with the provision of the Pact of Biak-na-Bato, the Filipino leaders voluntarily went into exile in Hong Kong.

But the truce was short-lived because of violations committed by both sides.

Aguinaldo returned to the Philippines in 1898 and immediately called for the renewal of the revolution against Spain.

Among the first leaders who heeded Aguinaldo's call, Paciano led his valiant men in the battlefield.

He did not stop struggling even when the Filipino-American War broke out in 1899. He boldly fought the new colonizers until his capture by the Americans in 1900.

When peace was restored, Paciano devoted himself to farming his land in Calamba. He remained in private life and refrained from political involvement until he died in 1930.

In contrast to Pepe who was much photographed and documented, there are only two known pictures of Paciano—a snapshot of a family gathering and another of his corpse.

It was not that he was camera-shy. He refused to be photographed because he was a wanted man; the absence of pictures meant greater freedom for him.

After Pepe's execution, Paciano chose the quiet life and extended to his brother the peace and respect a hero deserves.

Indeed, the family members consistently turned down offers from the government intended to provide benefits for them.

They politely responded that the patriotism of the Rizal family had never been for money or any other material gain.

PRIDE IN BEING FILIPINO: Flag-raising rites marked the 108th Philippine Independence Day in New York. The East Coast Fil-Am community—135 Filipino organizations in all—was led by Ambassador Baja and New York Consul General Rebong. ELMER CATO/PHILIPPINE MISSION

NYC mayor joins Filipinos in early Freedom Day fete

From page A1

York cops on horseback looked on.

"This is a wonderful day for us. The parade is well-organized, and the weather is fine. We've been in America for decades, yet we have to continue showing to the future generations our culture," said Dan de Guzman, grand marshal of the Philippine Independence Day Council 2006 parade.

Eight-year-old Zean Llamas, dressed in a red, pink and violet Muslim gown and shawl, gracefully danced the Muslim martial dance called "Silat" to the beat of gongs and drums.

Her movements on the open stage were fluid and dreamy, yet filled with vital energy.

"I feel great. I feel that I can show my feelings through this dance. I've been learning native dances for four years," Llamas said.

100 years

The affair also marked a milestone for Filipino-Americans celebrating 100 years of Filipino immigration to the United States.

"It's been 100 years since Filipinos first came to Hawaii. This shows that America is built by people from around the world," Mayor Bloomberg said.

The festival captured the dynamism of Filipino immigrants and their impact on the social and economic life of the New York tri-state area.

Daisy de Guzman, a physician, joined the parade with other members of the Philippine Medical Association of New Jersey.

"I immigrated to the US 30 years ago. As a physician, I help a lot of people who need health care by telling them about preventive medicine," De Guzman said.

She described her practice in New Jersey as "very successful," with 80 patients daily.

There are about 3.5 million Filipinos and Filipino-Americans in the United States.

The first batch of Filipino farm workers arrived in Hawaii in 1906.

The 1965 Immigration Act paved the way for Filipino professionals—many of them doctors, nurses and engineers—to enter the United States.

In the 1990s, many Filipino teachers arrived. Some worked as teachers, others as nannies and caregivers to senior citizens.

"I feel I'm serving the working people of America as a physician. America gave me a great training to be a doctor here. I help people with prostate problems and diabetes," said Catherine Alcarez, who immigrated from the Philippines 22 years ago and is now based in Atlantic City.

Dressed in colorful native gowns, members of the Filipino-American Women of New York and Connecticut marched in the parade.

Members of Philippine Forum, who are at the forefront of immigrant protest rallies, marched with giant paper dolls to push for the legalization of illegal immigrants and facilitate family reunification.

The celebration was unique for its variety.

Filipino war veterans representing Philadelphia and New York marched in the parade and saluted the colors.

Members of the Grunge Pinoy Rock band performed rock, love songs and danceable tunes.

Jazz band players marched to the tune of "Puttin' on the Ritz."

From Mozart to Marley . . .

From page A1

tion and helps pass the time.

A surgeon in Operating Room 7 at the New York-Presbyterian Hospital in Upper Manhattan, Dr. Marc Bessler, jockeyed a patient's spleen to get to the kidney.

"White Shadows" by Coldplay murmured in the background. A resident cut away tissue near the kidney. Abba's "Waterloo" came next in the shuffle.

Across the corridor on another day, Dr. William B. Inabnet, an endocrine surgeon, prepared to cut into a patient's neck. His iPod played "La Traviata," by Verdi.

Topic for 50 years

Playing music in operating rooms has been a subject of medical journals, going back 50 years. At least five studies published in the last dozen years show that music benefits surgeons and patients, or at least does them no harm.

Generally, the attending surgeon, the honcho in the hierarchical operating room, decides the playlist. Next in line is often the anesthesiologist. If no doctor brings music, it may come down to the CD collection of the head surgical nurse. Any member of the team has veto power if the music becomes distracting or interferes with communication.

In a survey of 200 anesthesiologists published in 1997 in the British journal Anaesthesia, 72 percent of respondents said music was played regularly in their operating rooms. About 26 percent felt that music "reduced their vigilance" and interfered with communication. Half felt that music was distracting when they encountered a problem.

Timing critical

But some surgeons have adopted music into their practice.

Dr. Nas Eftekhar, a retired pioneer of hip and knee replacements, used Mozart's "Eine Kleine Nachtmusik" to mark the exact moments to apply cement to the femur and insert the artificial joint. "The timing is extremely critical," he said.

There is no way to generalize about content.

"As wide as musical tastes are, that's as broad as the listening habits of surgeons in the operating room," said Dr. Eric Rose, chairman of the department of surgery at the Columbia University Medical Center, which is affiliated with New York-Presbyterian. Rose's tastes range from Vivaldi to Simon and Garfunkel.

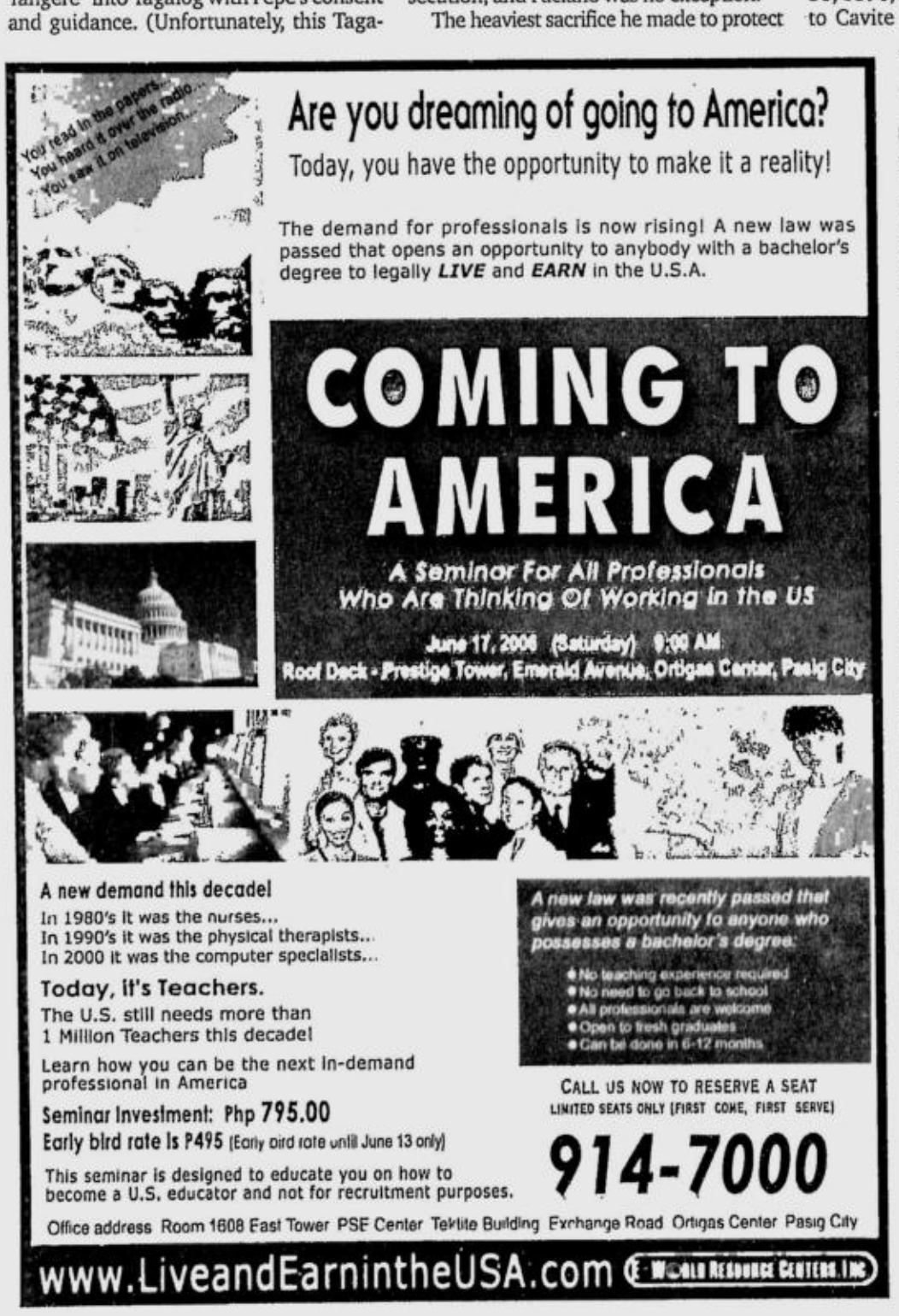
System of music choice

Many operating rooms come equipped with music equipment, although iPods now appear to be the system of choice. Some patients are given headphones.

Surgeons often ask patients what they want to hear. Inabnet has to be especially sensitive, because in most of his cases, the patients receive local anesthesia and are awake.

Dr. Marc Dickstein, a New York-Presbyterian anesthesiologist, said a teenage girl facing a lung transplant had brought a CD of Seal, her favorite artist. "It was just kind of a powerful scene there," he said. "This was what she wanted to hear before what could have been her final moments."

The girl made it. "She was unbelievably brave," Dickstein said. *New York Times News Service*



Fate of AFP unit protecting seat of power hangs

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

THE CONTINUED EXISTENCE OF THE ARMED Forces of the Philippines' National Capital Region Command (NCRCom) has come under serious doubt after its last commander, Lt. Gen. Alan Cabalquinto, retired last month.

Malacañang still has to appoint a new NCRCom chief to replace Cabalquinto who retired on May 19 after a stint of one and a half years.

The AFP Board of Generals has recommended Army Brig. Gen. Juanito Gomez to the post, but Malacañang ignored the recommendation, fanning speculation that the NCRCom may be deactivated soon.

NCRCom deputy chief Brig. Gen. Salvador Penaflor, who has been acting commander since May 19, is due to retire within the month.

"The situation is dynamic so the organization must also be dynamic," was Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Generoso Senga's reply when asked about the possibility of deactivating the NCRCom.

"Nothing's permanent... The organization is as dynamic as the situation develops," he said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo activated the NCRCom shortly after rebel soldiers staged a mutiny at the Oakwood Premier hotel in Makati City on July 27, 2003.

With four battalions under it, the NCRCom's primary task is to protect the seat of power against coups d'etat and other destabilization attempts.

It is based in Camp Aguinaldo, the military general headquarters located in Quezon City.

The NCRCom's troops are usually placed on standby to augment anti-riot police forces during major street protest rallies, such as at the height of the "Hello Garci" wiretapping scandal last year.

Last Feb. 24, when elite military units, the Scout Rangers and Philippine Marines nearly withdrew support from President Macapagal-Arroyo, the NCRCom went on double red alert. Military tanks and troops from nearby provinces were called in to augment the NCRCom's forces.

The Philippine Army, however, has also formed its own anti-coup d'etat task force consisting mostly of troops from the Special Operations Command. Members of the Scout Rangers, the Army's most elite fighting unit, were not included in that task force.

Solon slams oil deal with Malaysian firm

A MEMBER OF THE House of Representatives has scored the government's plan to allow a foreign company "of dubious origins" to extract oil from the Malampaya natural gas fields off Palawan.

In a privilege speech before Congress adjourned last Thursday, Rep. Abrahan Kahlil B. Mitra of the 2nd district of Palawan questioned the way the Philippine National Oil Co. Exploration Corp. (PNOC-EC) gave the award for the development of the oil leg of the Malampaya Deep Water Gas-to-Power Project to the Malaysia-based Mitra Energy Ltd.

Mitra said the firm was incorporated under the laws of Bermuda but has its principal offices in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. "This Mitra cannot be trusted," he said, adding that in spite of the similarity in names, he had nothing to do with the company.

The congressman is the son of the late Speaker Ramon Mitra.

He said he could not understand why the Malampaya consortium, which includes Shell Philippines and Chevron that operates the Camago-Malampaya natural gas fields, has relinquished its right to extract oil in addition to natural gas. The consortium had been reported as saying earlier it did not believe the oil deposits in the area were large and attractive enough for it.

41M barrels of oil

The fields are said to contain around 41 million barrels of oil which the Malaysian company Mitra estimates could be extracted over four years at a total cost of $684 million.

Questions

The Palawan congressman posed several questions on the "farm-in agreement" between the PNOC-EC and Mitra Energy Ltd.: Would this do away with the usual bidding process? Will PNOC-EC effectively dispose of its share or right to Mitra Energy? Would the government again leave the development and exploitation of the country's natural wealth in the hands of foreigners?

On the last question, he recalled that the Supreme Court had adopted a "Filipino First" policy when it struck down the proposed sale of the Manila Hotel to a Malaysian company several years ago, arguing the hotel was part of the national patrimony.

"If a hotel is considered part of the national patrimony that should be in the hands of Filipinos, what about our natural resources? In particular, what about our ability to produce our own source of oil?" Mitra asked.

He suggested that the government shoulder the financial requirements of the PNOC-EC so that it could pursue the development of the country's oil reserves.

Agreement

PNOC-EC announced last week it had decided to enter into a farm-in agreement with Mitra Energy Ltd. to develop the oil leg of the Malampaya project after evaluating eight proposals.

It said that under the company's proposal, first oil may be drawn from the Malampaya oil rim before the end of next year.

Project details

Eduardo Mañalac, PNOC-EC's chief executive, said details of the project were still being threshed out. He said the state firm could either enter into an agreement with Mitra alone or include the Argo Group, Mitra's partner, as proposed by the Malaysian company. Other companies that had submitted proposals could become subcontractors.

Mitra is also PNOC-EC's partner in Service Contract 57, which covers part of Calamian, Northwest Palawan.

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Comelec names LP mediator

THE COMMISSION ON Elections has appointed one of its commissioners, Rene Sarmiento, to unify the two feuding factions of the Liberal Party.

Comelec Commissioner Resurreccion Borra said the election body on Thursday issued a resolution appointing Sarmiento as LP mediator.

Borra told reporters the commission en banc gave Sarmiento one week to unify the two factions and make the LP a single political party again before the midterm elections next year.

Despite Sarmiento's appointment, the Comelec will proceed with the hearings being conducted regarding the party leadership dispute between Sen. Franklin Drilon and Manila Mayor Lito Atienza.

Both Drilon and Atienza had conducted separate elections of LP officers with each faction claiming to be the legitimate LP.

"They (the LP factions) will go down together if they will remain divided. Commissioner Sarmiento was designated to make proper reconciliation efforts and to persuade both sides to be united as one again," Borra said.

In the past, feuding political parties gave Comelec headaches, particularly in the accreditation of the official party candidate and which faction was entitled to the copies of election returns allotted for the opposition. *Jerome Aning*

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RP pushes for new definition of 'work'

By Jerome Aning

THE PHILIPPINES HAS URGED THE international community to redefine the meaning of work by including overseas workers and unpaid family workers who also contribute to national economies.

Outgoing Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas said in a speech last Thursday at the 95th International Labor Conference in Geneva, Switzerland, that the international definition of labor force did not include the eight million Filipino overseas workers (OFWs) and four million unpaid family workers in the country.

Work had been defined as that which was done inside national boundaries, Sto. Tomas said, noting that the Philippines and other countries subscribed to this international definition before foreign workers started moving in phenomenal numbers across national borders.

This definition, she said, explicitly excluded OFWs. "While the presence of OFWs is felt nationally, OFWs are not counted, thereby rendering them virtually invisible."

The DOLE chief said that work was defined as an activity for which one was paid, effectively eliminating mothers and other individuals who cooked, cleaned house and did other mundane things that allowed us to run factories, offices and businesses.

She said that society owed its continued existence to people who take care of people running the economy.

Desirable work

Sto. Tomas called for the correction of views regarding decent work, which some societies defined as "work that is desirable."

"While the rhetoric of social debate acknowledges the debt we owe to those who till the soil or those who perform the technical or vocational requirements of our daily existence, there is an unwritten or unsaid bias against this occupation," she said.

Acknowledge biases

Members of the International Labor Organization must acknowledge that such biases exist, she said, before they could transform these obviously necessary jobs into decent work.

"Work that is not legal, immoral or obviously harmful may constitute decent work if we value them adequately and if we educate society properly as to what can happen if those jobs suddenly disappeared," Sto. Tomas explained.

She said the definition of work was being threatened by its increasingly transitory character and the emergence of trilateral relationships, particularly in the outsourcing industry, where the immediate employer was not really the ultimate beneficiary of the services rendered by the worker.

Call center agents

She cited the country's more than 100,000 call center agents, medical transcriptionists, and animators subcontracted by companies that were not actually the workers' principals.

Many global enterprises, Sto. Tomas said, had local counterparts who would do the subcontracted work usually for definite periods of time.

This increasingly temporary nature of employment created social tensions that could lead to heightened class conflict. The changing patterns in the world of work, she said, required parallel changes in acknowledging the existence and contributions of the OFWs, unpaid family workers, and people whose jobs did not fit the traditional concept of a clear employer-employee relationship.

"We cannot further advance the welfare of these workers unless we first acknowledge that they exist," Sto. Tomas said.

No work for kids

She, however, maintained that there were some facets in the world of work that should remain the same. For instance, children in school should not be made to work, she said.

Moreover, people should not be forced to work, nor should they work under conditions that are hazardous or conditions that are morally or legally unacceptable, Sto. Tomas said.

J. T. Abaño; 87

JUSTINA TOMADA ABAÑO, RETIRED teacher and widow of the late Ormoc police chief Guillermo Dajes Abaño, died on June 8 at the age of 87.

She is survived by her children Erlinda, Manuel, Dr. Margarita A. Napasindayao, Guillermo, Lolita A. Jayme, Rafael and Grace A. Tribucio; children-in-law Josefina, Patricio Napasindayao, Adelaida, Solomon Jayme, Janet and Faustino Tribucio; grandchildren Joyce, Julia Ann, Manuel Guillermo, Guillermo III, Agnes Christine, Gilbert Anthony, Hannah Katherine, Ma. Solita Carmel, Mary Marguerite Gertrude, Ma. Carla Jessica, Ma. Giselle Janina, Ma. Jarra, Gerard Patrick and Pio Christopher; and great grandchildren Aësha Glynnis, Zhared and Anastasia.

Interment will be on June 15 at the Ormoc Catholic Cemetery after the 2 p.m. Mass at the Mother of the Redeemer Parish, Fatima, Cogon, Ormoc City.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Sunday, June 11, 2006
Trinity Sunday
Deuteronomy 4:32-34, 39-40
The Lord is God

Moses said to the people, "Ask of the times past. Inquire from the day when God created man on earth. Ask from one end of the world to the other: Has there ever been anything as extraordinary as this? Has anything like this been heard of before? Has there ever been a people who remained alive after hearing as you did the voice of the living God from the midst of the fire?

"Never has there been a God who went out to look for a people and take them out from among the other nations by the strength of trials and signs, by wonders and by war, with a firm hand and an outstretched arm. Never has there been any deed as tremendous as those done for you by Yahweh in Egypt, which you saw with your own eyes.

"Therefore, try to be convinced that Yahweh is the only God of heaven and earth, and that there is no other.

"Observe the laws and the commandments that I command you today, and everything will be well with you and your children after you. So you will live long in the land which Yahweh, your God, gives you forever."

2nd Reading: Romans 8:14-17
We cry, "Abba! Father!"

All those who walk in the Spirit of God are sons and daughters of God. Then, no more fear: you did not receive a spirit of slavery, but the Spirit that makes you sons and daughters and every time we cry, "Abba! (this is Dad!) Father!" the Spirit assures our spirit that we are sons and daughters of God. If we are children, we are heirs, too. Ours will be the inheritance of God and we will share it with Christ; for if we now suffer with him, we will also share Glory with him.

Gospel: Matthew 28:16-20
In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit

The Eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw Jesus, they bowed before him, although some doubted.

Then Jesus approached them and said, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Go, therefore, and make disciples from all nations. Baptize them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to fulfill all that I have commanded you. I am with you always until the end of this world."

Commentary

We have heard the voice of God (not at Sinai) but in Jesus, in the Word/Scriptures in community and we belong to God even more closely than Israel, and we must be faithful in obeying our God's commandments together so that we proclaim God to all. In Jesus we are given the Spirit to call God Father.

In baptism we are given the same relationship with the Father that Jesus has, with the power of the Spirit. We are drawn into the Trinity, the mystery of communion/community in God. And then we are to spend our lives living out that Trinity with all others in the world. A daunting task filled with grace and power.

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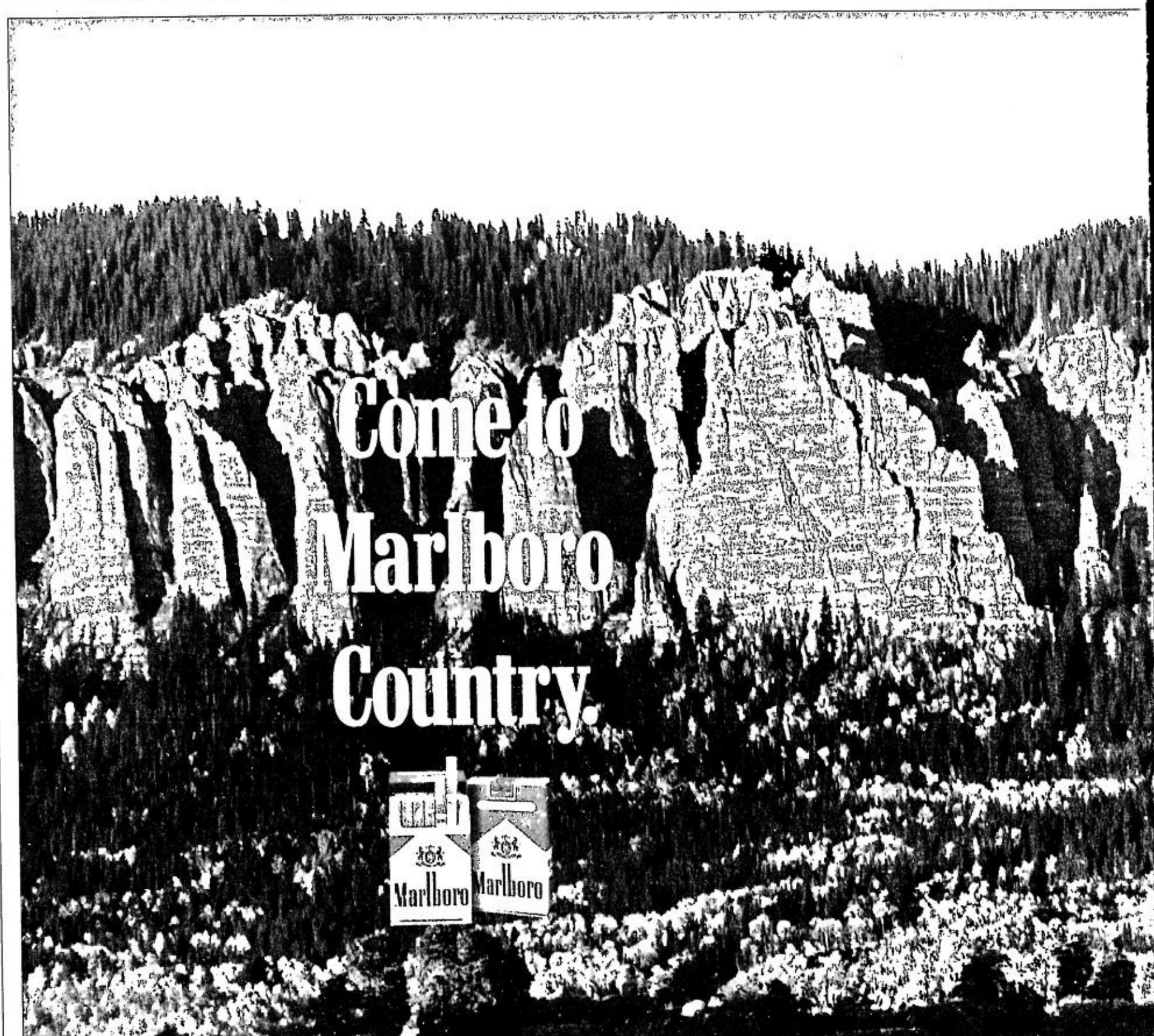


Government Warning
is dangerous

CORRUPTION TOME. All relevant laws, Supreme Court decisions and jurisprudence on corruption cases have been gathered in the 'Ombudsman Resource Book on Public Accountability'. Ombudsman Ma. Mereceditas Gutierrez (second from left) receives a copy from USAID Mission Director Jon Lindborg at a recent turnover ceremony. Also shown (from left) are Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio and James L. Agee, chief of party of the ROLE, or Rule of Effectiveness, project.

Think twice about working abroad, bishops warn Pinoys

By Jerome Aning

THE CATHOLIC BISHOPS Conference of the Philippines called on the government yesterday to step up its information campaign to make more people aware of the widespread abuses committed against overseas Filipino workers in Syria, Lebanon and Jordan.

The CBCP also cautioned Filipinos to think twice before going to these countries.

The CBCP, through its Episcopal Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People (ECMI), expressed alarm over the growing number of runaway domestics in the three countries and the apparent lack of government assistance to distressed OFWs.

Meeting

On Friday, ECMI officials and Bishop Pedro Arigo of Palawan met with representatives of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA), the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) and the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) to discuss the 17 cases of abuse against OFWs in the three countries.

'Elgie's' case

The cases included that of "Elgie," a 40-year-old domestic stranded in Syria, who was raped several times by jail guards after her employer had her arrested for running away.

ECMI executive director Fr. Edwin Corros urged the government "to give true information on what was going on" in Syria, Lebanon and Jordan so that Filipinos who want to work there would be made aware of the risks and could take proper precautions.

Runaways

The OFWs should be also made to realize that sneaking into any of the three countries without legal documentation could further expose them to more abuse, he added.

Corros told reporters that OWWA deputy administrator Angelo Jimenez admitted to the ECMI that about 60 Filipino domestics in Lebanon run away every month, taking shelter at the embassy compound in Beirut.

Even the Philippine Embassy in Jordan was overwhelmed by the 100 runaways at its compound. It had recommended a month-long ban on the deployment of domestics, which the POEA approved effective June 1.

Husband's tale

Corros said a labor attache or welfare officer should be sent to Syria, because according to complaints received by ECMI, the Philippine honorary consul there, who is a Syrian citizen, was not tending to the needs of the OFWs.

The ECMI was alerted to Elgie's case by her husband, who recounted how Elgie had run away in late March from her Syrian employer, a former military official, because of maltreatment, salary reduction and sexual harassment.

Elgie reportedly went to the Philippine honorary consul who allowed her to return to her agent. The agent, in turn, took her back to her employer, who beat her up and sent her to jail. There she was raped several times by the agent and the jail guards.

Later, the agent sent Elgie to another employer.

Elgie ran away again last month, but this time, she sought help and refuge from Filipino residents in Syria.

Elgie's husband brought her case to OWWA last month. He said an officer told him that Elgie's repatriation would take a while because of legal complications since his wife was a direct hire.

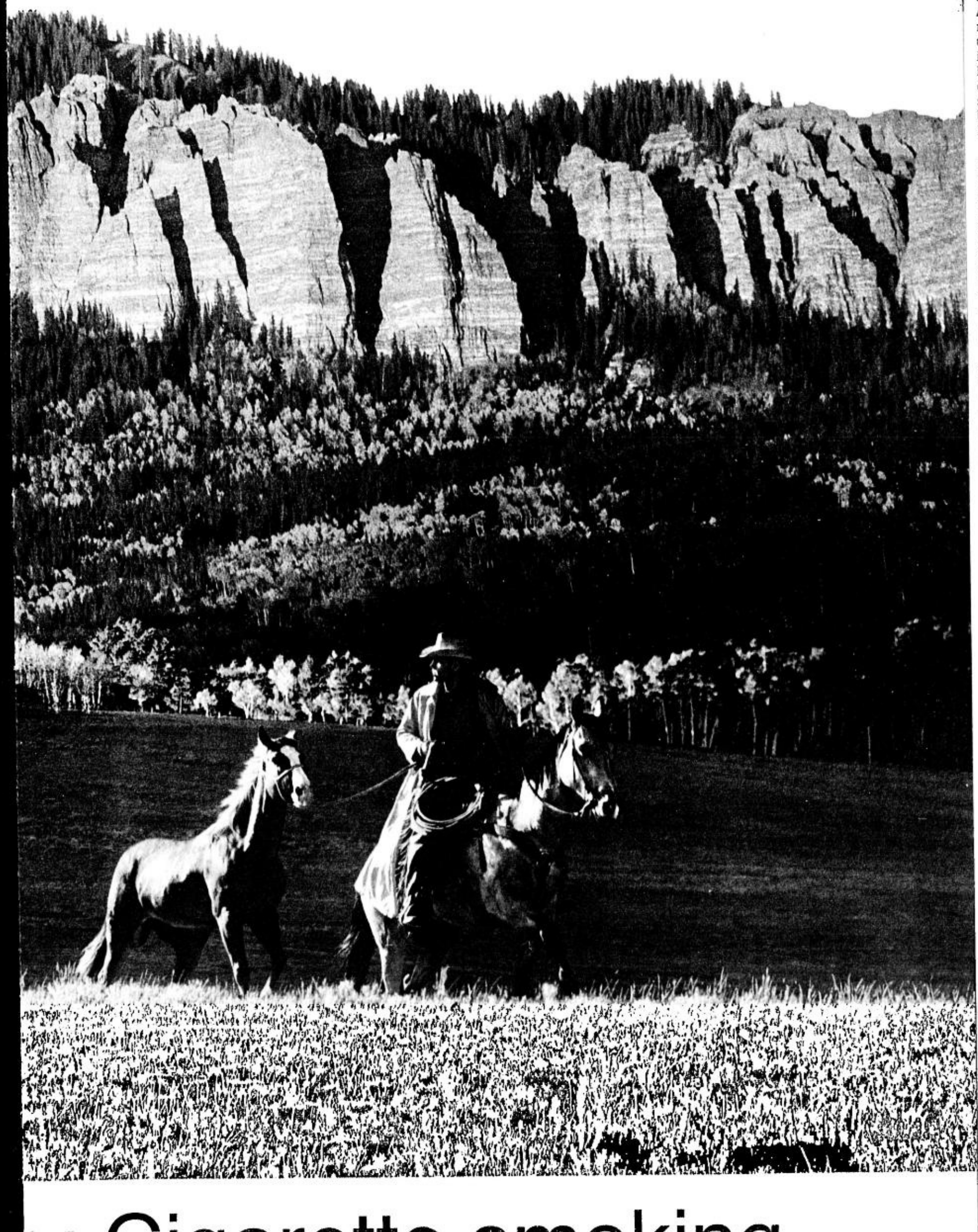
Cases of abuse

ECMI paralegal coordinator Sr. Teresita Laguna said she documented 17 cases of abuse among OFWs in Syria, Lebanon and Jordan. The cases were brought to the Church's attention by the victims' relatives here, citing recruitment violations, labor abuses and gender-based forms of violence.

Corros said the government representatives admitted that they had few personnel to help OFWs in the three countries.

Corros reminded them that Filipino workers deployed to a foreign country should be assured of "real protection" from possible abuses.

Jimenez, for his part, said he would personally handle Elgie's case and would make sure she was immediately repatriated.



g: Cigarette smoking to your health

P8-B victims' fund intact, says solon

THE P8-BILLION FUND EARLIER SET ASIDE from the recovered Marcos deposits as compensation for victims of human rights abuses during martial law is intact, a party-list lawmaker said yesterday.

Akbayan Rep. Loretta Ann Rosales (not the chair of the House committee on human rights as earlier reported) said Budget Secretary Ronaldo Andaya Jr. assured her that the fund was intact.

Rosales added that budget officials were also checking how much interest the P8 billion had earned so that the human rights victim's compensation fund could reach at least P10 billion.

"I asked Nonoy and he was laughing and told me 'Don't worry. The money is intact and maybe we can look at the interest.' It has already gained interest," Rosales said.

She said Andaya also told her that he would look for other sources of funds to increase the compensation if the interest on the P8 billion were not enough.

"We will exert all efforts to restore it back to P10 or P11 billion," Rosales said.

She made the statement after Sen. Joker Arroyo on Friday said President Macapagal-Arroyo should not be blamed for the P3-billion reduction in the proposed compensation fund.

The House bill providing compensation for martial law victims originally provided for $200 million (or P11 billion at the P55 to the dollar exchange rate in 2004) but Rosales said Malacanang ordered the House leadership to set the amount in pesos and fix it at P8 billion.

Rosales yesterday insisted that the Palace ordered the cut but said she was happy that executive branch officials like Andaya had expressed willingness to have the compensation fund restored.

"The three branches of government should work together on this. The bottom line is what we can do to help the victims," she said.

Philip C. Tubeza

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OPINION

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Slaying a myth

EDITORIAL

THE KILLING LAST WEEK OF TERRORIST LEADER Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the Jordanian jihadist behind many abductions and suicide bombings in strife-torn Iraq, is certainly a military feat of a high order. But it is not—and cannot be—the political and historic milestone the Bush administration would like to think it is.

The myth of al-Zarqawi as the leader of the anti-American insurgency in Iraq, a foreigner who symbolized al-Qaida's engagement in the country, was exactly that: a myth. And it was a myth created, in large part, by the American government he had sworn to fight.

It is true that he had taken part in or masterminded the kidnapping of foreign nationals in post-Saddam Iraq; it is believed—and US officials have repeatedly said—that he is responsible for the death of dozens in Iraq; it is likely that he had even personally beheaded two American hostages.

But while he served as a symbol of violent resistance to American occupation, he was not, and never was, its leader. As a must-read report (already available online) in next month's Atlantic Monthly magazine also reveals, he was not—and never was—Osama bin Laden's deputy in Iraq either.

Only two months ago, the Washington Post revealed that the Pentagon had been pursuing a strategy to inflate al-Zarqawi's reputation. The lead paragraph in that story read: "The US military is conducting a propaganda campaign to magnify the role of the leader of (al-Qaida) in Iraq, according to internal military documents and officers familiar with the program. The effort has raised his profile in a way that some military intelligence officials believe may have overstated his importance and helped the Bush administration tie the war to the organization responsible for the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks."

How did he "tie the war" [the invasion of Iraq] to Osama? The Atlantic Monthly report drily notes one example: "One can only imagine how astonished al-Zarqawi must have been when [US Secretary of State] Colin Powell named him [in February 2003] as the crucial link between (al-Qaida) and Saddam Hussein's regime. He was not even officially a part of (al-Qaida), and ever since he had left Afghanistan, his links had been not to Iraq but to Iran."

But making him out to be more than he really was did not only help the White House make that tenuous connection between Osama and Saddam; it also helped US forces meet operational objectives in post-invasion Iraq.

The Post story notes: "The documents state that the US campaign aims to turn Iraqis against Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, a Jordanian, by playing on their perceived dislike of foreigners. US authorities claim some success with that effort, noting that some tribal Iraqi insurgents have attacked Zarqawi loyalists."

One of the documents obtained by the Post, the transcript of a meeting, quotes one key military intelligence officer telling Army officials: "Our own focus on Zarqawi has enlarged his caricature, if you will—made him more important than he really is, in some ways."

They certainly did. Judging from the iconic economics of reward money, al-Zarqawi was deemed by the US government equal in importance to Osama himself; he, too, had a $25-million bounty on his head.

But that same intelligence official quoted in the Post also described al-Zarqawi's operation as resolutely small-scale, "a very small part of the actual numbers." On the other hand, Osama, who actually masterminded the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, continues to inspire anti-American, anti-Western violence around the world. He has invented something new: franchise terrorism. His terrible network is impossibly wide, reaching even the hills of Basilan, the streets of Toronto—or the alleys of Baghdad. In fact, it was in the cities of Iraq that al-Zarqawi found his calling: as a franchisee terrorist.

Will al-Zarqawi's death (the US air strike also killed a woman and child, among others) lead to the collapse of the insurgency in Iraq? The short answer is "No." But, perhaps, now that he's dead, the White House will finally be forced to face reality in Iraq, not myth.

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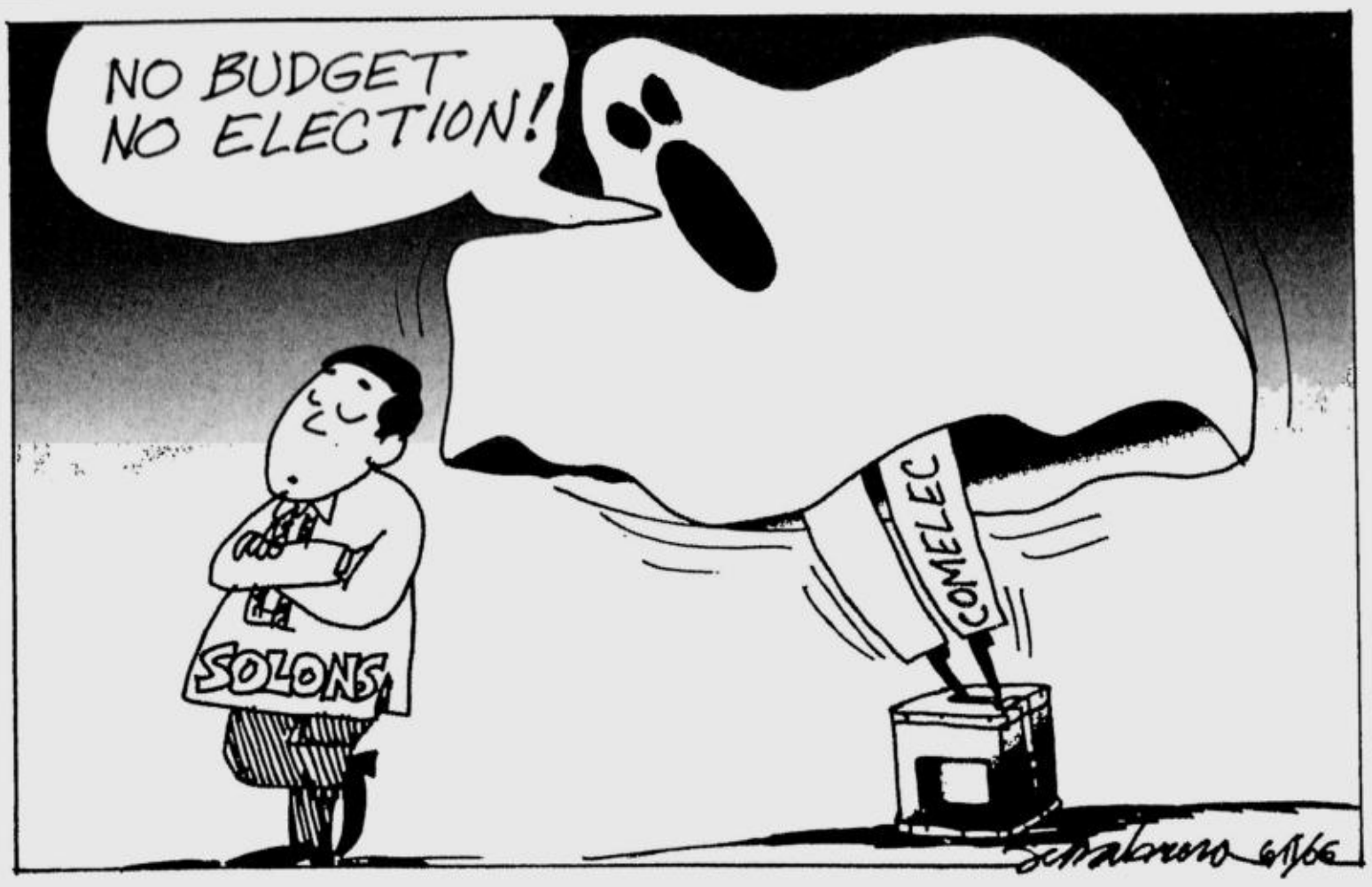

Congratulations to the Araullo High School

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

I HAVE CORRESPONDED WITH CONSUELO D. Sison on various civic and political matters over the years although I have never met her. Last January, she sent me an article she had written that expressed her continued zest for life upon reaching the ripe age of 85. She's one optimistic lady who could serve as an excellent model for the younger generations uninvolved in public affairs.

Recently she sent me a letter inviting my wife and me to the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Araullo High School, of which she is an alumna. The party was held last Friday evening at the Manila Hotel. I had phoned earlier to express my regrets because of my chores in the school where I am teaching. But to belatedly share in the festivities, I will now say a little about her high school for the benefit of its alumni and the information of the public.

The Araullo High School is the former Manila High School that was established on June 11, 1906. The first of its kind in the capital city of the country, it was later given its present name and was soon followed by three other secondary schools also honoring justices of the Supreme Court of the Philippines.

The four original high schools in the city of Manila are, in alphabetical order to avoid any suspicion of favoritism, the Araullo High School, the Arellano High School, the Mapa High School and the Torres High School.

The Filipinos first appointed to the Supreme Court in 1901 were Cayetano Arellano, as Chief Justice, with Victorino Mapa and Florentino Torres as associate justices. Mapa was transferred to the Cabinet in 1913 but was returned to the Court as the next Chief Justice when Arellano retired in 1920. Torres who was then the senior associate justice resigned out of *amor propio* when he was by-passed, probably because he was already 76 at that time. But as fate would have it, the younger Mapa retired after only one year and died ahead of him at age 73.

Manuel Araullo was already a legal institution upon his appointment as Chief Justice in 1921, having earlier occupied many judicial positions, especially as head of the Sala de la Civil of the Supreme Court organized by the American military authorities in 1899. Upon its abolition, he was widely expected to be appointed to the new Supreme Court but was overlooked for unknown reasons. He was the logical choice, however, to succeed Mapa and served with great distinction until his death in 1924.

I wrote recently in this column about the Mapa High School where I graduated, but that is another story. I will probably write also about the Arellano and Torres high schools, but my subject today is the Araullo High School, which observed its centenary yesterday with a reception and dinner-dance. There must also have been some obligatory speech-making, but let us hope it was considerately brief.

I imagine the splendid affair at the appropriately chosen Centennial Hall of the Manila Hotel was eagerly attended by hundreds of its festive alumni, including the graduates from the earlier years like Mrs. Sison. In her letter, she wrote of some of the famous progeny of her Alma Mater, thus:

"During the reception dinner-dance, Centennial Awards will be received by the families of illustrious graduates—the 3 Presidents of the Philippines, Manuel A. Roxas (Class 1910), Jose P. Laurel (Class 1911), Elpidio Quirino (Class 1911), and Gen. Carlos P. Romulo (Class 1916).

"The durable still active at 94 years of age, Dr. Fe del Mundo (Class 1926), will receive her award personally."

I am sure there are other less famous but equally worthy men and women who have added to the luster of the Araullo High School. Beyond the glare of public attention and esteem, they have led quiet lives performing their assigned tasks for God and country according to the ideals inculcated in them by their affectionately remembered school.

It must be a proud and wonderful feeling to meet once-cherished friends again from the wistful and resurrected past. Recollection of those who have passed away must also be part of that feeling. And so too is the common pride in belonging to the Araullo High School with its rich record in molding its students for worshipful lives and responsible citizenship.

Similar accomplishment can be appreciated for the other three original high schools in Manila that have also exerted sincere efforts to help in the edification of the youth. In their separate ways, each of them has contributed to the welfare of the country with its own roster of outstanding or quiet but no less deserving graduates.

Honor to all four of them! But today, on the occasion of its centennial celebration, a special accolade is offered to the Araullo High School, its alumni and the teachers who guided them along the way, for its magnificent achievements in the service of the Nation.

And counting . . .

MOMENTS

Fr. Jerry M. Orbos, SVD

TEACHER: WHAT COMES AFTER THE NUMBER 8?

Boy: Number 9, Ma'am

Teacher: What comes after number 9?

Boy: Number 10, Ma'am

Teacher: Wow! Who taught you how to count?

Boy: My father, Ma'am

Teacher: Okay, what comes after number 10?

Boy: Jack Ma'am, then Queen, then King!

* * *

Today is the Solemnity of the Most Blessed Trinity. We must approach this mystery of three persons in one God not so much with the thought of counting the number of persons in the Trinity as with the desire of being counted in the Trinity. Ours is an invitation to become involved and to become a part of the Trinitarian circle of love. Rather than tackling the question about the number, focus on the invitation to become a member in the Trinitarian circle.

* * *

In today's Gospel (Mt. 28, 16-20), Jesus reminds us of our mission for the Trinity: "Go therefore, and make disciples of all nations, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." Not only are we counted in the Trinity. The Trinity is counting on us! Ours then is an invitation to share in the life, love and mission of the Trinity, so that the "Holy and Triune God live in our hearts and in the hearts of all" (favorite prayer of St. Arnold Janssen, SVD).

* * *

Next Sunday is Fathers' Day. Let me share with you a letter which I received from an 11-year-old girl by the name of Joanna Francesca. It is dated March 10, 2006. "It's been 5 years that I haven't seen my papa. The last time I saw him I was 7 years old. He left us January 22, 2001. I have a younger brother. He doesn't even know our papa. He always mistakes other people as our papa. Please pray for me and my brother to see once again our papa."

Fathers, never, never underestimate how important your presence and your love are in the lives of your precious, fragile and helpless children.

* * *

There is a 6-year-old boy who calls me in my Monday Radio Program "Hello Father" at Radio Veritas (846 AM Band). He asks me to pray that his father will come home to them. I and the radio listeners are often moved to tears whenever this little boy is put on the air. How many more little innocent children suffer because of parents who couldn't let go of their toys or their selfish personal joys?

* * *

The mandate of our Lord to make disciples of all nations in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit starts in the home. Let us make our homes the dwelling place of the Trinity. Let love, respect, gentleness and charity abound in our homes. Let us be reminded today that, indeed, success outside the home cannot compensate for failure inside the home.

* * *

Speaking of success, Dr. Amelou Benitez Reyes, president of the Philippine Women's University recently shared with me this food for thought: A successful person is one who earns and accumulates wealth or honors for himself/herself; a significant person is one who, with or without wealth or honors, affects positively the people around him/her. Indeed, a person is worth not for what he/she has, not even for who he/she is, but, for what others have become because of him/her.

* * *

June 12 is our Independence Day. What has happened, what is happening to our country? Is this the dwelling place of the Trinity? What is happening to our leaders? Where are they leading us? What values are they teaching us? Where are the heroes who can inspire us? Should we just be content with liars? Say it isn't so, Oh God! Surprise us, oh God. Please surprise us again, oh God!

* * *

Let me end this piece with the last part of the letter of the 11-year-old girl I mentioned above: "I am the second honor in my class. That's because Nicole cheats. She is not honest, so she is first honor. What can I do? No matter how hard I try, I'm still second. But it's okay. I know only God can make a way because every hard work has its prize and every mistake has its own consequence. I know somehow, someday I can be first honor. Please pray for me."

I wrote back: "By being honest, you are already first honor in God's eyes. Be assured that God knows how to count, and He knows who is naughty or nice. Continue to be good even if others are not!

* * *

Please pray for our SVD Capitulars from all over the world, who are gathering in Rome this June for the 16th SVD General Chapter to seek, with the help of the Holy Spirit, new ways and means to spread the Trinitarian vision, mission and love worldwide.

* * *

Now available at all Catholic bookstores and National Bookstore outlets is the book "God's Love" as experienced by Filipino priests. Published by Logos Publications, the publishing arm of the Society of the Divine Word (SVD), this 100-page book is a moving account of how God manifested His love in the lives of Fr. James Reuter, SJ, Fr. Ruben Tanseco, SJ and yours truly. For more details please call 711-1323 or 732-2736.

* * *

A moment with the Lord:

Lord, thank you for counting us in in your life. Help us to live lives that count. Amen.

Family and flag

REVEILLE

Ramon J. Farolan

THERE IS SOMETHING MYSTICAL ABOUT birth dates in our family. My late father, Modesto Farolan, was born on June 12, Philippine Independence Day. I was born on Aug. 31, Malaysia's National Day. My oldest son, Miguel, a resident of Woodridge, Illinois, was born on Feb. 25, the day the nation sets aside to commemorate the Edsa Revolution. My only daughter, Carmela, who now lives in Evanston, Illinois, was born on Aug. 17, Indonesia's Merdeka Day. It appears that for three generations, at least one member of the family has been identified with the birth or re-birth of freedom in one of three Asean countries.

In the early days, the fight for freedom and independence was basically a struggle against colonial powers. We fought against the Spaniards and later the Americans; the Indonesians against the Dutch, and the Malays against the British. In a way, it was all so simple. One merely had to go by the color of the skin. The February event was more complicated and in some ways more difficult and bitter because it pitted Filipino against Filipino, at times relatives against relatives—and like any civil conflict, the wounds it inflicted are taking much longer to heal.

Tomorrow, the nation marks the 108th Anniversary of its proclamation as the First Republic in Asia. Although short-lived, it would be the spearhead of similar nationalist uprisings in the region, following the end of World War II.

My late father was born at the turn of the century two years after the proclamation of Philippine Independence by General Emilio Aguinaldo. He was one of the first graduates of UP High, and this was his only formal education. Shortly after, he decided to work full time with the old Manila Daily Bulletin as a cub reporter. It is difficult to understand how he got through the newspaper business on a high school diploma. But from being a lowly cub reporter, he rose to become editor and publisher of the Philippines Herald, a Madrigal family newspaper. One can only ascribe such success to hard work, discipline, perseverance and self-study.

In the words of his good friend, the late Benjamin Salvosa, president of the Baguio Colleges Foundation, he was "the acme of the informal process of self-education and self-discipline."

It was at the Herald premises in Intramuros that as a young boy, I first met many of his fellow journalists, like Doroy Valencia, Teddy Benigno, Henry Quema, Chitang Guerrero, Lulu Peña and Joe Lansang, to name a few. And I almost forgot, Mary Joaquin, who was to become my mother in-law a few years later.

I remember how I almost fouled up the inaugural issue of the post-war Herald. A congratulatory message from General Carlos P. Romulo, then ambassador to the United States and my dad's predecessor as editor and publisher of the paper, was eagerly awaited for the front page of the maiden issue. Everything else was in place and the presses were ready to roll. No message. After many follow-ups with Washington, the local cable company showed my dad a receipt acknowledging delivery of the telegram with my name as recipient. I had signed for it and set the cable aside somewhere in the house and went off to play basketball with the neighbors, not realizing that the whole organization was waiting for this particular telegram. Of course, all hell broke loose when he finally located me—and Romulo's message.

President Ramon Magsaysay appointed him the nation's first head of the commission for tourism, forerunner of today's Department of Tourism. His work in this field would earn him the title of "Father of Philippine Tourism" and he would be honored posthumously with the Kalakbay Lifetime Achievement Award for "developing and promoting Philippine tourism as a means of bringing in foreign exchange so essential to the economic stability and prosperity of the country."

A few years later, President Diosdado Macapagal moved him to the foreign service as ambassador to South Vietnam and Cambodia and later to Switzerland. His last assignment was ambassador to Indonesia under President Ferdinand Marcos, a post which, if I might mention, I later occupied under President Corazon Aquino. When I reported to Jakarta in 1986, some of his old friends confided to me that they thought Modesto Farolan was starting a second tour of duty in Indonesia. Incidentally, one of the great things about our Indonesian brothers is their strong sense of nationalism as reflected in the pride and reverence they hold for their national colors. For days prior to marking their Independence Day on August 17, the simple red and white flag of Indonesia is prominently displayed in the front of most homes in all parts of the land. This could only indicate a commanding love of country which has kept a nation of some 13,000 islands united in the face of conflicts and natural disasters. How many homes in our respective communities display the Philippine flag as we approach June 12?

When I spoke before the graduating class of the Philippine Military Academy last February, on the occasion of the awarding of their rank insignias by the family of the late General Vicente Lim, I related to the cadets what my father once told me. He had served under six Philippine presidents from Roxas to Marcos and he reminded me that "as a public official, you do not serve any individual. You serve your country and your people."

* * *

Our congratulations to Ma. Cristina Barin-Paz who was recently elected president of the Veterinary Practitioners Association of the Philippines, the oldest and largest private veterinary association in the country. Teng, as she is called in the family, belongs to the prominent Barin clan of Guagua, Pampanga. She is married to Dr. Gabriel Paz, also a veterinarian.

Holding out for a hero

REBEL WITHOUT A CLUE

Patricia Evangelista

SO THERE'S THIS NEWSPAPER REPORTER, AN EASYGOING sort of chap who walks into the office every morning, wearing black-framed glasses. Sometimes, in the middle of the day, he dashes out through the back door, spins around inside a phone booth for a couple of seconds, then flies out wearing a red cape, faster than a speeding bullet—not a bird, not a plane, but the great hunky superhero with a big S right in the middle of his chest. And then, after rescuing the damsel in distress (more often than not his co-reporter Lois Lane who snatches kisses from our boy in blue), he strides into the newsroom, glasses in place, hair a little windblown, and is assaulted with "You just missed Superman!"

Never mind that he looks exactly the same (sans glasses). I'm willing to believe that the disguise works, and that the team of seasoned reporters at the Daily Planet isn't made up of a bunch of gullible morons. In fact, I don't complain (and neither does the rest of the world) that the guy flies through the air, deflects bullets, blatantly violates every law of physics, and probably has the most clichéd superhero name ever invented.

When Angel Locsin—who spends half an episode in bland, boring girl-wear—transforms into the Darna of gold bikini and red helmet, with the same face, same voice and same, albeit curled, hair, I will buy the idea that she's suddenly somehow unrecognizable. In "Megamol," Megastar Sharon Cuneta's character adopts an alternate personality so she can sing in public—her grand disguise: a mole. And the movie was a hit.

This "willing suspension of disbelief"—meaning a sort of poetic faith—is a phrase coined by 19th-century romanticist Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Of course, I don't like that the Superman disguise is thin, the same way I'm annoyed at the fact that it's humanly possible for Brad Pitt to live through a bombing, a car crash, a Uzi aimed at his chest, an elevator plummeting 30 floors, various shootouts in deserts, mansions and department stores in one two-hour movie; after which, he still manages to look like the hottest male this side of the galaxy. A little more and I would have been rolling my eyes. Or, in the words of Douglas Adams, author of the Hitchhiker series, "demand rigidly defined areas of doubt and certainty!"

I used to be a debater, and went through rigorous training that involved bluffing my way through matches that questioned a variety of ideas—from the existence of weapons of mass destruction in North Korea, to the value of the male species, to the earth-shattering dispute between the idea that a Happy Meal leads to happiness versus the concept that happiness is a fundamental requirement for the consumption of a Happy Meal. Rene Descartes said that the proper way to go about life is always to question, question and question everything from Cassandra Ponti's nose to the kitchen sink. He argued that any idea that can be doubted should be doubted.

But I'm a writer and a romantic as well—the kind who sighs sappily over moonlit nights and cries over every viewing of "A Walk to Remember." I heard Dr. Edith Tiempo lecture once on the superiority of the artist: "Artists have always beaten scientists to the punch in getting to the truth." Or as one of my favorite writers put it beautifully, "None of the truest things in life—like love or faith—was arrived at by thinking. Indeed, one could almost define the things that mattered as the ones that come as suddenly as thunder."

Even on the superficial level of believing, there's Bonny Tyler's "I need a hero." My personal template for my dream guy: the "street-wise Hercules to fight the rising odds," the "white knight upon a fiery steed," who has "got to be strong, and he's got to be fast and he's got to be fresh from the fight." There are few things I believe in as firmly as this: that James Dean, the quintessential bad boy of the 1950s, was destined for me; alas, he was born too early. My friend Jae insists that there must be something fundamentally wrong with women who fall for bad boys. I argue that James Dean was different—he could change with a woman's touch.

There's a danger to illusions and disillusionment can come with the impact of a 10-wheeler truck with faulty brakes running at two hundred kilometers per hour. I have recently been informed that James Dean, my James Dean—of the white T-shirt with the rolled-up sleeves and star of "Rebel Without a Cause"—was gay. In the back of my head, I heard glass breaking and the screaming of a thousand anguished souls.

The English language in itself has dozens of clichés on believing in an impossible dream: we "tilt at windmills," and "wish upon a star," "shoot for the moon," and "dare to dream." There are a thousand songs dedicated to overcoming incredible odds. Every fairy tale's theme song (and it can be argued that fairy tales are rehearsals for the rudeness of life) is about how "I can go the distance" and that "A dream is a wish your heart makes."

I sat in once on a Sociology lecture, and finally found an answer I liked as to why believing is necessary to survival. By projecting a belief in an illusion, or a self-image, a perception of the "best self" that one can be, a person can negotiate her reality. Of this, there's no better example than the one in cyberspace, where this recreation of identity occurs minute by minute—the anonymity gives a person the perfect opportunity to become whoever he wants to be. A blog, an e-mail address, a website—these are all recreations of a chosen, not imposed identity. And this is what I like best: We don't need to find a purpose—we create it. And then we fight for it.

Mark Twain once wrote: "Don't part with your illusions. When they are gone, you may still exist, but you have ceased to live."

There are a few definite truths in my world, truths that have come as "suddenly as thunder." I believe in Superman. I believe that being happy means that you want to be nowhere else than exactly where you are. I believe that this country is going somewhere, and that one day, I'm going to reach my unreachable star.

Most of all, I believe that James Dean was reincarnated as a straight man, and that he's now lurking inside some bad boy with a leather jacket, waiting for this woman's touch.

From 'Il Mare' to 'Lake House'

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

I WOULD ADVISE YOU TO PARK YOUR LOGICAL faculties at the lobby before you watch "The Lake House." Only this way can you fully enjoy the film, jumping willy-nilly into its incredible premise—that two people, separated by time, can write to each other and fall in love through the powers of a magical mailbox.

It may sound unbelievable, even a bit ridiculous, when the movie's story is summed up so baldly. But trust me. There's more to "The Lake House" than just "magical realism," as its publicity material trumpets.

There is, for one, Keanu Reeves, who is a bit fleshier here than in "The Matrix" movies or even in "Something's Gotta Give," where he played the youthful doctor-lover of Diane Keaton and who loses her to Jack Nicholson, would you believe? This is the movie where, in my own estimation, he had reached the peak of his "*ka-guwapuhan*." But I'll still take him as he is in "The Lake House."

At the film's climactic last scene, when we sense a clinch coming, we all hold our breaths until we hear in the darkness a woman letting out a shriek, "Aayyeee!" Her voice echoes, and we all break out laughing, the tension relieved.

Playing opposite the hunky Keanu is Sandra Bullock, who is reunited with Reeves after they first starred in a "Speed" movie 12 years ago. Bullock here plays Kate, a doctor who finds herself at a crossroads in life and career, moving back to the city after a brief stay in a glass house that stands above a lake, in a lovely setting of trees, water and open sky. Before she leaves, Kate leaves a note to the next tenant, asking him to forward her mail to her new address. Reeves' character, Alex, finds the note in the mailbox and is puzzled by it. As far as he knows, he is the house's first tenant after more than a decade, and he has yet to make its rundown structure livable. Besides, when he checks out Kate's new address, he finds it's a condominium complex still under construction. Most puzzling of all is that Kate dates her letter 2006, while Alex is reading it two years earlier, in 2004.

* * *

THIS two-year gap makes for much of the plot's complications, and the moviemakers make the most of the discrepancy, mining the glitch in the time-space continuum for all its fantastic and romantic possibilities.

There is, for instance, a "date" that the couple go on, two years apart, as Alex "guides" Kate through a tour of Chicago's architectural wonders. Kate, for her part, tells Alex he may get a glimpse of her on a certain date in a train station, asking him to do her the favor of picking up a valuable item that she had left behind.

Is it possible for two bright, successful and mature individuals to fall in love in this manner—across the abyss of time and logic?

Kate and Alex grapple with issues other than an "impossible" love. Alex must deal with his feelings for his father, a renowned architect whose emotional distance and lack of empathy repel his two sons. Kate has a fiancé, but finds herself unhappy and unsatisfied, emotionally distanced and distracted.

Finally, Kate and Alex agree to meet each other for dinner at an upscale restaurant the next day for Kate, but two years hence for Alex. When Alex stands her up, Kate decides to give up on this preposterous romance, asking him to let her let him go. What happened to Alex? And is their love, born on notes left inside a wondrous mailbox, all that impossible?

* * *

"THE LAKE House" is an adaptation of the South Korean movie "Il Mare," which was exhibited at the Pusan International Film Festival in 2000 and was immediately snapped up for adaptation by "The Lake House" producers.

Directed by first-time director Lee Hyeon-seung, and written by Kim Eun-jeong, "Il Mare" sets a similar plot trajectory as "The Lake House," but with one crucial difference. Eun-joo, the female lead, is played by Jeon Ji-hyeon, who would later shoot to fame in "My Sassy Girl." In "Il Mare," which is the name given to the glass house, she plays a voice actor pining for a lost love, a fellow actor who breaks up with her when he leaves for studies abroad. Perhaps, the producers thought Bullock was too old to play a love-struck young woman, but her character loses much of her appeal and allure as a result.

If you ask me, I found "Il Mare" much more atmospheric than "The Lake House," with mood music perfectly complementing the utterly lovely cinematography. An on-line critic, complaining that "Il Mare" is "about nothing at all," concedes that it is nonetheless "the most beautiful movie I have ever watched."

* * *

HELPING set one in the proper mood for a story that defies reason is the script of "Il Mare," which, in the tradition of most serious "art" films in Korea, is spare and filled with gaps and silences. In fact, I found "The Lake House" much too "talk-y," too many coincidences, and events explained, instead of just happening, to be interpreted as the viewer wishes.

"The Lake House" script was written by award-winning playwright ("Proof") David Auburn, though I couldn't help wondering if he wasn't compelled somehow to make the story more accessible to audiences who prefer their movies lite.

Director Alejandro Agresti tries his darndest to create mood and atmosphere, but the effort falls flat. Publicity materials insist that the story transcended culture and setting, but why does the "Hollywoodized" version of "Il Mare" exhibit so little of its sensitivity and sensibility? Perhaps such a story makes little sense in a culture of sexual openness and fleeting commitments.

Still, barring a commercial run of "Il Mare" here, which I doubt, I would urge all romantics to spare some time for "The Lake House." I, for one, have decided a second viewing.

What makes artists 'national'

PUBLIC LIVES

Randy David

IF A SURVEY WERE TO BE RUN ON HOW MANY Filipinos know the country's national artists and their works, the results would be very revealing. They would show that the artists the State celebrates are not necessarily the people's own choices. Indeed, rare would be the national artist who, by his or her work, articulates the nation's experience and self-understanding and, at the same time, touches the lives of ordinary people.

The reasons for this may be traced to the lack of fit between the nation conjured by the State and the collective identity of the people it hoped to represent. The wider the gap between the two, the larger would be the discrepancy between the nation's symbols and the people's heroes. Every sovereign state seeks to narrow this gap—in many instances, without much success.

It is interesting to analyze the citations for this year's national artists. My fellow INQUIRER columnist, Ambeth Ocampo, the chair of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, has printed the one for Benedicto R. Cabrera (Bencab), the awardee for Visual Arts. Bencab is cited for "delineating a portrait of his people and conceiving metaphors of their complex national history." In particular, his "'Larawan' paintings connect his art to the collective consciousness of his compatriots and converse with his other concerns like the depiction of migrants in Europe and America, heroes of struggles, and everyday Filipinos caught up in the cycles and revolutions in culture." Finally, "his vision is resonant because it continually responds to the exigencies of art and society and the aspirations of Filipinos." What is clearly highlighted here is not just the artistry of Bencab, but above all his nationalism.

Yet not one line in this eloquent citation refers to how ordinary Filipinos have been affected by Bencab's work. He interprets their lives, but has he touched them? He found meaning in their lives, but has he made their lives more meaningful? One can only assume that outside the small community of artists, students, collectors and writers in this country, only a few have had any acquaintance with his paintings. This is not to take away anything from this fine Filipino artist's greatness as a painter; for I believe he fully deserves the award. It is only to emphasize the split between official values and popular values.

On the other hand, I am curious to know how the citation for Fernando Poe Jr. reads. For lack of space, Ambeth Ocampo did not include it in his column. For lack of someone from the Poe family to receive it, Malacañang chose not to read it in the presentation ceremonies. A pity, because FPJ is both a national artist and a people's artist. He did not become great because the movie critics or the culturati liked his films. He became great because ordinary Filipinos went to his movies and were changed by them.

The gap between the State and the people in former colonies like the Philippines is what nationalist ideology tries to cure. The leaders of the nation had presumed that the anti-colonial war would automatically galvanize the various communities and classes into one nation. But, in fact, the emergence of a viable collective national identity—a "political ethnicity," to borrow from the anthropologist Clifford Geertz—was far from smooth.

Says Geertz: "Indeed the very success of the independence movements in rousing the enthusiasm of the masses and directing it against foreign domination tended to obscure the frailty and narrowness of the cultural foundations upon which those movements rested, because it led to the notion that anti-colonialism and collective redefinition are the same thing." As we have seen in our history, they are not. The acquisition of sovereignty does not create the nation. The leaders of newly independent East Timor are now rudely wakened to this truth.

We ourselves arrogantly presumed the integration of the Bangsa Moro into the Filipino nation. In our quest for self-governance over these islands, we glossed over the political and cultural differences that set the Moros apart from the rest of the population. We short-circuited the tortuous process of creating the collective subject, "from whose will the activities of government seem spontaneously to flow," by co-opting Moro leaders and turning them into Filipino politicians. We flooded their lands with our settlers, and wove their artistic traditions into the tapestry of the nation's imagined heritage. And now we have named the Muslim sculptor Abdulmari Imao as national artist. I hope Malacañang did so in fair recognition of the man's artistic achievement, and not as a political concession to his ethnicity.

The elite hijacked Filipino nationalism and stripped it of its social content. They became so obsessed with quickly taking over the reins of government that they did not see much value in creating a strong national identity among the people. They rushed headlong into the project of modernity, even as they paid lip service to a national culture, and promoted rapid Westernization in the end.

Today, 108 years after we first declared ourselves a nation, who we are that did this remains hazy. We have purchased modernity at great costs to our collective identity. Yet, just about the mark of modernity we possess is the English language, or what passes for it. Any given language, writes Geertz, is either "a borrowing or a heritage; a passport or a citadel." The mass migration of our people shows what English has been for us—a passport.

Comments to public.lives@gmail.com

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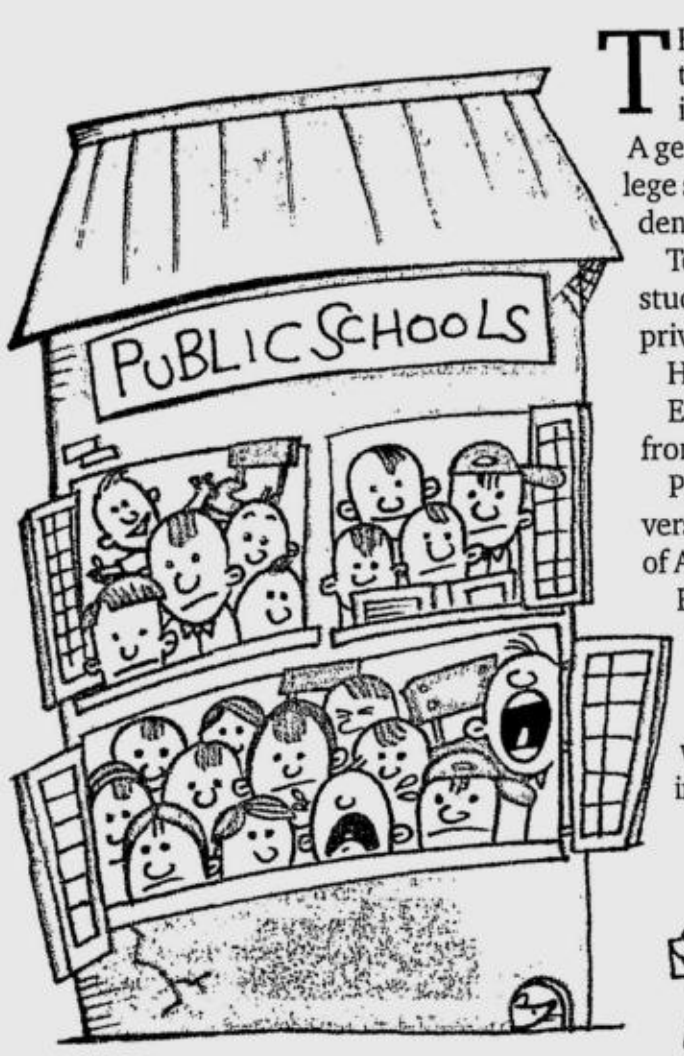
Editor Juan V. Sarmiento Jr.

Private schools losing students



THE NUMBERS TELL THE STORY. SINCE THE 1980s, STUDENTS HAVE BEEN transferring to public schools in droves, leaving private schools with a declining share of the total enrollment.

A generation or so ago, private schools in the country accounted for 90 percent of college students, 60 percent of high school students and 20 percent of elementary students, according to the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines.

Today, less than 70 percent of college students, 20 percent of high school students and less than 10 percent of elementary students are enrolled in private schools.

How did this happen?

Economics is the main driving force behind the massive "migration" of students from private to public schools.

Private education now costs an arm and a leg. Tuition at the Ateneo de Manila University for an academic year was P62,940 as of May. It was P99,866 at the University of Asia and the Pacific, and P91,260 to P110,916 at De La Salle University.

By contrast, the Polytechnic University of the Philippines, a government school, charges only P576 (P12 a unit), according to data gathered by PDI Research.

No wonder, a growing number of middle-class families whose incomes cannot keep up with the rising cost of living are no longer sending their kids to private schools.

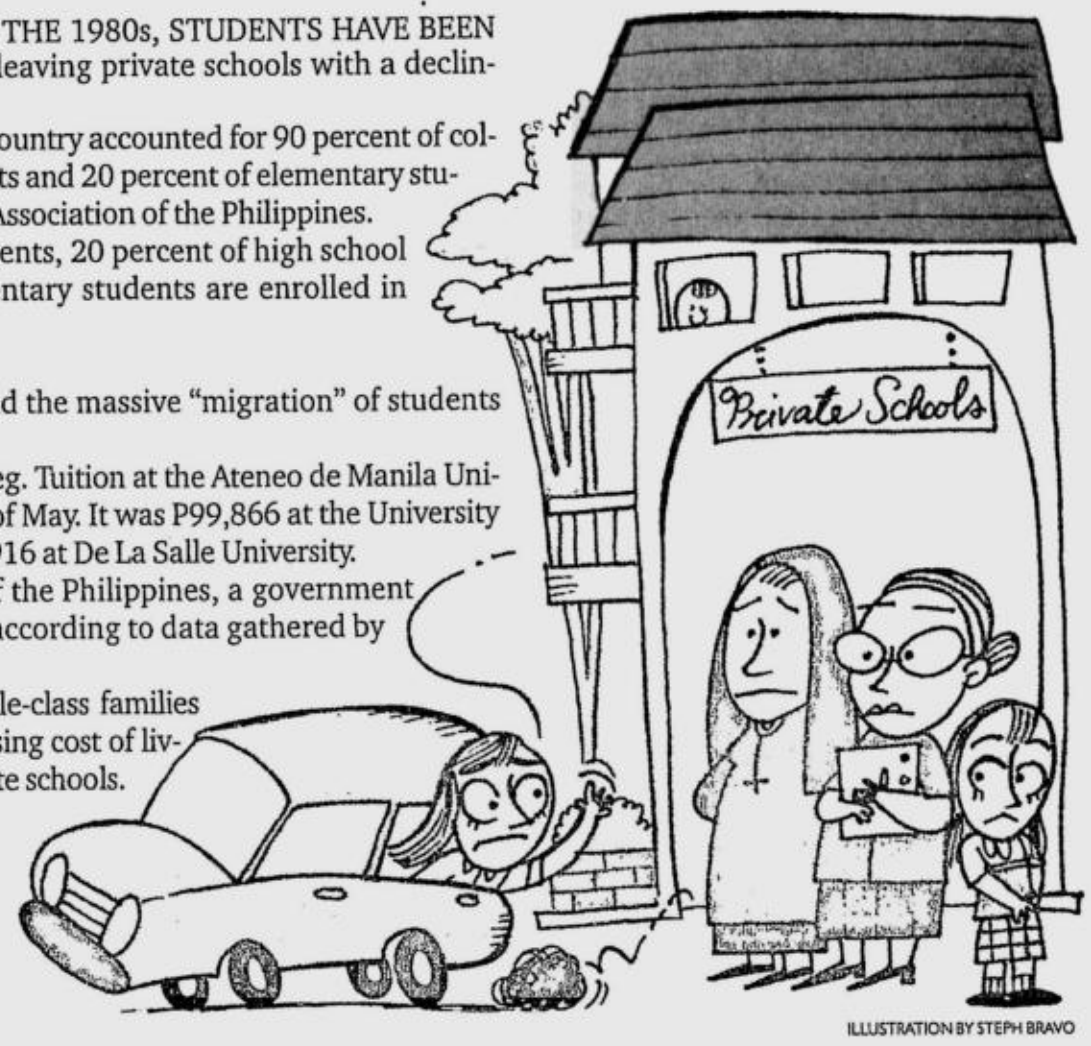


ILLUSTRATION BY STEPH BRAVO

Private schools need subsidy

By Mariano U. Piamonte Jr.

VERY FEW PRIVATE SCHOOLS IN the Philippines existed before World War II. They were mostly Catholic while the rest were Protestant or family-owned.

The SVD Fathers claim that the first Catholic school was established in 1595 in Cebu. It was a grammar school named Colegio de San Ildefonso, which eventually became University of San Carlos.

After World War II, more and more private schools were established. Their share of the total enrollment in the country gradually rose and peaked in the 1970s and 1980s, when about 90 percent of college students, 60 percent of high school students and 20 percent of elementary pupils were enrolled in private schools.

Later, their enrollment share gradually declined so that today only about 70 percent of the college students, 20 percent of the high school students and less than 10 percent of the elementary pupils are enrolled in private schools.

Free high school

Some factors contributing to the decline are the following:

- Establishment of more public elementary and secondary schools in compliance with the constitutional mandate of providing free elementary and secondary education. Public schools charge minimal fees such as those for PTA, Red Cross, anti-TB, or Scouting.
- Establishment of more state colleges and universities, and lately of local government colleges and universities, all of which are largely subsidized by the government. They charge minimal tuition and other fees to supplement their subsidy.

The local government colleges and universities are multiplying faster than the state colleges and universities because the former are created by mere local council resolution, while the latter by tedious legislation approved by both houses of Congress.

- Increasing tuition and other fees of private schools, which make them less affordable to poor students who have no other choice but to move to government schools.

Private schools have no choice, either, but to increase their fees because they do not have other major sources of income. They are not subsidized by the government unlike in some countries such as Australia and New Zealand.

At present, the government is implementing the Educational Service Contracting (ESC), under the Republic Act No. 8545 known as "The Expanded Government Assistance to Students and Teachers in Private Education."

Under the ESC, which started as one of the flagship programs in education of the Aquino administration, high school students, who cannot be absorbed in the public schools, are enrolled in private schools, and their tuition and other fees are partially subsidized.

There are around 500,000 ESC student grantees enrolled in more than 1,500 private schools nationwide.

Starting this school year, the Department of Education will implement the Education Voucher System (EVS) as directed by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Under the EVS, the selected poor public elementary graduates will each be given a voucher, which the grantee can use to partially pay the tuition and other fees of the private school where he or she wants to enroll. Around 100,000 EVS grantees will be benefited. *(See boxed story.)*

Both the ESC and EVS are helping to prop up or arrest the declining enrollment in many participating private high schools, which are mostly small diocesan, parochial or mission schools in the rural areas.

Survival

In recognition of their complementary role with public schools in the education of the youth, the government must support the private schools and ensure their survival because they generally provide better quality of education.

Such support maybe in the form of subsidy for school operations or teacher salaries, soft or interest-free loans for school infrastructure and equipment, or more scholarships for students who wish to enroll in private schools at all levels.

Providing scholarships in private schools is a cheaper way for government to fulfill its constitutional mandate of making education accessible to all than constructing more public school buildings and classrooms and hiring more teachers to accommodate increasing enrollment. It will also help decongest public schools and reduce classroom shortages.

It is projected that by school year 2007-2008, public school enrollment will increase by 2.5 million students.

(Piamonte is the executive director of the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines, a group with 1,220 member schools nationwide.)

Education voucher system

By Alcuin Papa

LIKE TRYING TO HIT TWO BIRDS with one stone, the Department of Education (DepEd) is striving to ease the load of the public education system and help private schools through the Government Assistance for Students and Teachers in Private Education (Gastpe).

Under the program, DepEd pays private schools a subsidy to accommodate public school students entering high school.

It is meant to decongest public schools, already suffering from lack of space, teachers and facilities, and close the resource gaps to improve the quality of public education. At the same time, it will ensure the survival of private schools whose enrollments have declined in the past few years.

The program which is being administered by the Fund for Assistance to Private Education (Fape), pays private schools a yearly subsidy of P4,000 per student from public schools. Tuition Fee Supplement (TFS) in the amount of P500 is also given to some students.

The program started in 1996 with an initial coverage of 210,630 students. At that time, TFS was also given to 334,397 students.

As of May 2006, a total of 2,665,079 students had already benefited from the program with over P6.9 billion disbursed.

For 2006, there will be a projected 388,157 beneficiaries and an allocation of P1.5 billion.

Last year, Gastpe benefited over 382,000 students from low-income families who studied in over 1,700 private high schools nationwide.

Less expensive

The program is considered a less expensive alternative to building more classrooms and hiring more teachers. Sending a class of 50 students to private schools under Gastpe would cost around P200,000. But it would cost DepEd P625,000 to build a new classroom, hire a new teacher, procure more furniture and books for the same number of students.

Education officials have said that the number of grantees will be increased by 50,000 per year until the number of beneficiaries reaches around 775,000, which is enough to arrest the rapid increase in the number of students in public high schools.

This school year, Gastpe will be replaced by the Education Voucher System (EVS) while the TFS will be discontinued.

Similar to Gastpe, the EVS will enable government to extend assistance to public elementary school graduates, including out-of-school youth and qualifiers under the Philippine Educational Placement Test and the Alternative Learning System's Accreditation and Equivalency programs who want to pursue their secondary education in private schools of their choice.

Initially, 100,000 voucher grants worth P4,000 per voucher were awarded to public elementary schools, which will then choose deserving students who will enroll in private schools.

Gastpe will contribute P400 million to the EVS.

Below poverty line

The beneficiary must belong to the upper 50 percent of the graduating class in a public elementary school. He or she must meet the requirements of the private high school. Annual family income must be below the poverty line and the beneficiary must be willing to shoulder expenses beyond what the P4,000 subsidy can cover unless the private school writes off the difference.

The vouchers are nontransferable and awarded to the name on the voucher, but are paid to the private school.

A private school qualifies for the program when it is officially recognized by DepEd. It must also allow Fape to monitor and visit the school.

(Papa is an INQUIRER reporter covering the education beat.)

Country spending less on education

By Ricky Carandang

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO'S rebuke of acting education secretary Fe Hidalgo has had one benefit for the public: it has renewed attention on the crisis in our education system.

Depending on who you talk to, the backlog in classrooms could be as low as 3,000 and as high as 60,000. But there are other numbers that better illustrate the state of education in the country.

A few years ago, when I was writing an article about the slowly vanishing middle class, the Department of Education provided me with figures that showed that in the 1970s, about 70 percent of high school students were enrolled in private schools, while 30 percent were in public schools.

By this decade, those figures were reversed.

Massive migration

The gradually diminishing purchasing power of the average Filipino has led to a slow but massive migration from public schools to public schools. At the same time, despite a constitutional provision requiring that the biggest budget allocation be given to education, public spending for education has declined in real terms.

For example, the original 2006 budget proposed by Malacañang provided for a 5-percent increase in the budget of DepEd. If you factor in inflation, which is hovering at about 7 percent, in real inflation adjusted terms, the department's budget is actually lower by 2 percent.

While that may not be much, imagine that happening year after year for over nearly three decades and you have some idea how public spending for education has gradually diminished over the decades. It's true that over and beyond the DepEd's budget, public money flows into education.

A small portion of our lawmakers' pork barrel, thankfully, finds its way into the construction of school buildings and the purchase of textbooks. But factor in the migration from private to public schools and you see how dramatically real spending per student in the public school system has suffered.

The bottom line is that we're just not spending enough on education. And it shows. It shows in the fact that we Filipinos spend fewer years in school than many of our Asian neighbors. It shows in our increased difficulty with core subjects like English, Science, and Math. The education department's own survey of high school students shows that most of them lack the proficiency expected of students in secondary school. If you belong to the call center industry you are aware of how shallow the pool of proficient English speakers is. Call centers have had to resort to teaching employees English.

So what does this mean beyond the fact that call centers will not be able to grow as fast as they want because of the lack of employable workers?

It means that an increasing number of people are not being equipped with the skills necessary to earn decent-paying jobs. It means that only a very narrow segment of the population is feeling the benefits of the 5-percent average economic growth.

Spending less

With the population growing at 2.4 percent every year and the country spending less and less on education, we are churning out millions of people every year who are doomed to live a life of poverty in a vicious cycle that is amplified by lower tax collections, a faltering national health care system, and misguided government policies that perpetuate the vicious cycle of inequality.

What can realistically be done to break this vicious cycle?

We can start with the obvious: by dramatically increasing spending on education.

The World Bank believes that strategic policy interventions by the government could break the cycle of poverty and inequality over time. These interventions would be in the areas of asset reform, increasing access to capital, and a sustained program of increased spending on social services like education and health care.

Middle class

I can imagine the collective groan of the middle class as it anticipates the government dreaming up new ways to tax its already meager income. But we don't need new taxes to raise more money. We just need to improve tax collection. Yes, that has become a cliché that rarely goes beyond generalities, so let me propose something concrete. In 2005, the government collected some P20 billion in excise taxes on cigarettes.

This year the Bureau of Internal Revenue's target is about P28 billion. But it has been estimated that if it weren't because of massive tax evasion by the entire industry, the BIR could have collected at least P40 billion last year. Some estimates place the collectible amount at as much as P100 billion.

But assuming the lower estimate, the government could, theoretically, collect an additional P20 billion in tobacco excise taxes. Just imagine what an additional P20 billion could do if it were spent on education. It could eliminate the backlog in classrooms.

Is this possible? Yes. The technology exists to allow closer monitoring of the production and sale of cigarettes.

Another way is to widen the base of taxpayers. In this country of 85 million, there are less than 3 million people paying income tax regularly. Yet the Social Security System has about 20 million members. A comparison of the SSS membership with the BIR list of taxpayers could probably add another 2 to 3 million people to the BIR list. This can be done immediately.

So why aren't these things being done

(Carandang is the author of "Shrinking Middle Class," an article that appeared in Newsbreak magazine on April 12, 2004. He is an anchor-reporter of ABS-CBN.)

Enrollment in public and private schools

(SY 1979 to 2004)

	Preschool		Elementary		Secondary		Tertiary	
	% Public	% Private	% Public	% Private	% Public	% Private	% Public	% Private
1979 - 1980	30.41	69.59	95.02	4.98	53.85	46.15	na	na
1984-1985	41.74	58.26	94.04	5.96	58.90	41.10	na	na
1989-1990	47.21	52.79	93.38	6.62	63.53	36.47	na	na
1994-1995	52.69	47.31	92.46	7.54	68.38	31.62	21.35	72.95
1999-2000	51.48	48.52	92.75	7.25	75.53	24.47	30.24	68.13
2004-2005	Not available (na)	na	92.88	7.12	79.91	20.09	34.10	65.90

SOURCES: COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND 2005 STATISTICAL YEAR BOOK
COMPILED BY: CHONA GALANG, PDI RESEARCH

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Kin of slain activists seek justice

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—SINCE ASSASSINS killed her husband, Armando, in October last year, Jocelyn Javier has mostly mourned by herself.

On Saturday, the 35-year-old widow left her village of Sta. Clara in Cuyapo, Nueva Ecija, to join the relatives of 73 other political activists killed in Central Luzon from 2005 to May this year and 39 more who were abducted and feared dead.

At the Quezon City Memorial Circle where they gathered and saw each other for the first time, the group launched the Mothers and Relatives Against Tyranny (Martyr). Javier was chosen as the group's leader.

"A lot of us are grieving over the loss of our loved ones. But we cannot be grieving in solitude forever. If we won't work together, the government will not give us attention or get the justice we want," Javier told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

She said some 300 of them marched on Elliptical Road, carrying 84 cardboard coffins for the 74 victims and 10 Hacienda Luisita workers and supporters who died during the labor and agrarian strike at the estate from November 2004 to November 2005.

Others held large photographs of the missing.

Javier said she could not help but cry amid the courage she has been summoning to seek justice for Armando.

The couple was watching television at around 8:30 p.m. on Oct. 2 last year when two gunmen wearing ski masks barged into their house and shot Armando.

"Nine bullets pierced my husband's body. They didn't have hearts," Javier said. "My husband's only fault, if the government would call it that, was that he was the town coordinator of the [party-list group] Anakpawis."

Javier has been raising her 6-year-old daughter by herself since her husband was killed.

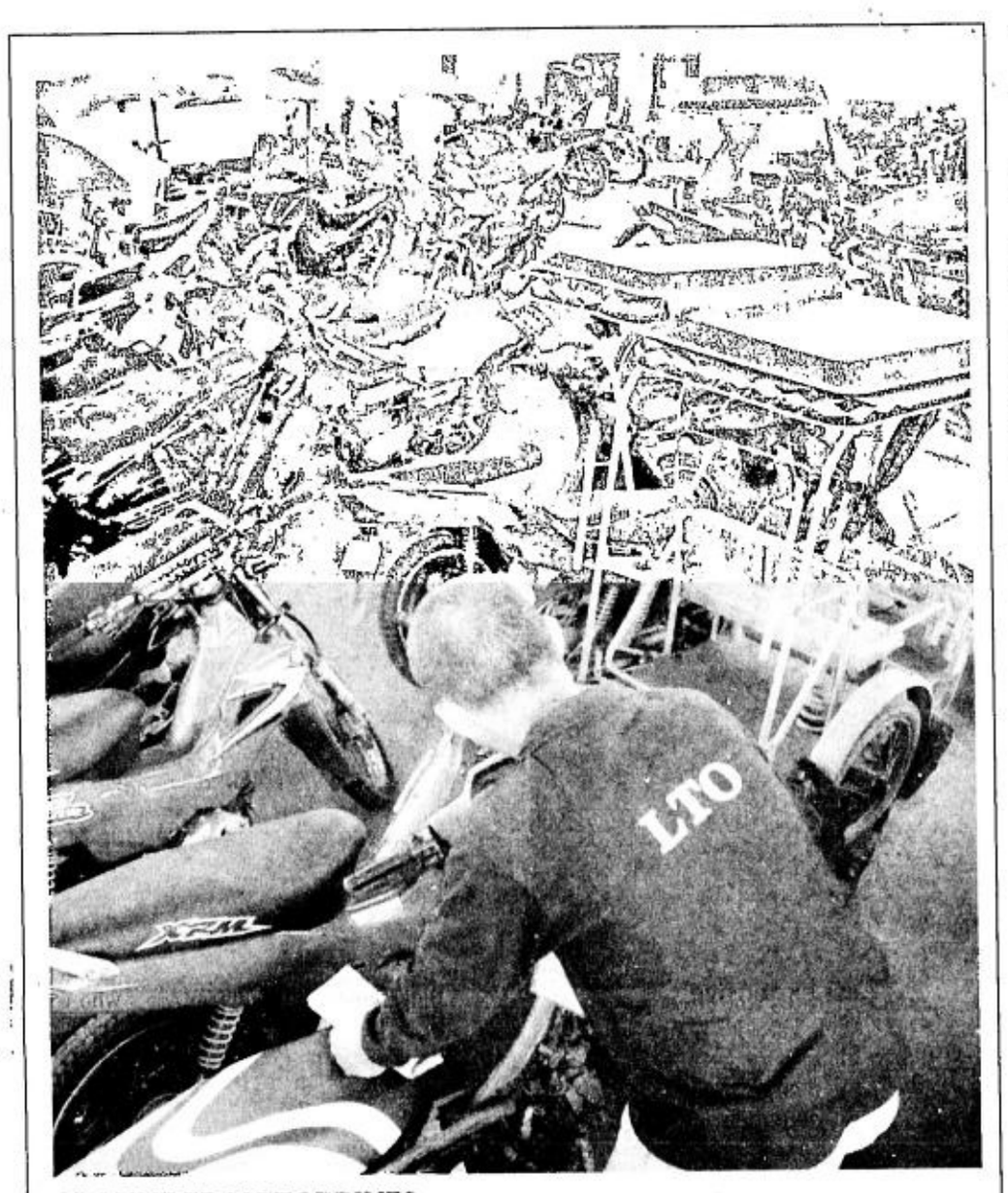
"President Macapagal-Arroyo is a mother herself. I hope she could understand our grief. I hope she uses her power to end the killings and bring the killers behind bars," Javier said.

But as the group protested, another member of a militant youth organization was reported missing.

Melanie Catipon, 21, a member of Anakbayan and a resident of Maria Aurora town in Aurora, was abducted by unidentified men on Friday night, the human rights advocate Karapatan said.

Javier said Martyr would rather have an independent commission to investigate the killings and human rights violations than let the Task Force Usig of the Philippine National Police do that work.

Roman Polintan, chair of the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan in Central Luzon, said the task force was "just a tool to clear the military and police forces of involvement in these atrocities and thereby misrepresent the truth."



GROUNDED MOTORBIKES
A deputized Land Transportation Office personnel conducts an inventory of apprehended single motorcycles inside the LTO's Motor Vehicle Inspection Section after the local government and the LTO in Davao City intensified its campaign against erring drivers with no license or with expired and unregistered ones. BING GONZALES/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

Rise in vigilante killings feared after death penalty abolition

By Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—AS ANTICRIME CRUsaders feared of the escalation of vigilante killings after the abolition of the death penalty law, suspected vigilantes in Cebu claimed their 163rd victim on Wednesday.

Neil Borinaga, 28, an ex-convict from Tejero, Cebu City, was gunned down shortly after 12 noon on Thursday while watching a local board game called "dama" along T. Padilla Extension, this city.

Borinaga died of multiple bullet wounds in his head after the lone motorcycle-riding gunman shot him several times at close range.

Tejero barangay Councilor Jessielou Cadungog said witnesses could not describe the gunman because he covered his face with a cloth.

Borinaga's live-in partner, Ivy Agujar said, Borinaga was released from the Bagong Buhay Rehabilitation Center (BBRC), the city's jail, in 2001.

Agujar said Borinaga had been involved in petty crimes in the Tejero area in the past but Councilor Cadungog could not say if the victim was still engaged in illegal activities at the time of his death.

Police investigators recovered two empty shells of .45 caliber pistol near Borinaga's body.

Last May 30, the 162nd victim, also an alleged petty criminal, was also gunned down at the city's port area.

The slaying of petty criminals began in December 2004 at the height of the pre-Christmas shopping season when street thievery and snatching became rampant.

The killings followed a similar pattern: One of two motorcycle-riding gunmen, their faces covered with cloth, bonnet or helmet, shot their victims with a handgun at close range.

Cebu City Mayor Tomas Osmeña has repeatedly denied that the city government and the local police had something to do with the killings but he refused to ask the police to prioritize the resolution of these cases, saying he did not want to make it appear that Cebu was safe from criminals such as holduppers, snatchers and others.

Osmeña said that if criminals were afraid that they could get killed by unknown assailants in Cebu City, then they must go somewhere else.

Ambivalent

In Pangasinan, Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz called the national leadership as "curiously ambivalent" as it pushes for the abolition of the death penalty on one hand but is silent on the killings of journalists and political activists on the other.

"This is politicizing human lives—when you are prodeath and prolife at the same time and trying to win over not only the opposition but also those looking for the truth about the leadership's legitimacy such as the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines," Cruz said in a telephone interview.

He said the decision of President Macagapagal-Arroyo to push the abolition of the death penalty was "very good." However, the administration's failure "to move a finger to stop killings of [journalists] and other groups is a big omission."

In Pampanga, Fr. Raul de los Santos of the Diocese of San Fernando's media apostolate program said Ms Arroyo's decision should not be prompted by political reasons.

"The death penalty never abolished crime so it is okay for Ms Arroyo to abolish it. I just hope that she did not do it for politics, but for [the preservation of] life," De los Santos said.

Cielo Macapagal-Salgado, Ms Arroyo's sister, welcomed the President's decision.

"I'm prolife and that's okay. We have to have a change of heart by helping people have a relationship with God so we will have peace," she said.

Lawyer Dante Ilaya, a human rights lawyer, said: "The Arroyo administration does not need the death penalty. Political dissenters are being killed anyway. While making it appear that she is prolife, the unabated killings will nonetheless persist under her repressive regime."

In Baguio City, Beverly Longid, CHRA vice chair, said many innocent people had been convicted of crime as a result of alleged sloppy police investigation and corruption in the judiciary. *Reports from Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes and Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau, and Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Program gives scholarship to slain soldiers

LUCENA CITY—NEAR MIDNIGHT ON Nov. 25 last year, Virginia, 37, a mother of three youngsters, was informed that her husband, Army T/Sgt. Manuel Buhawe died in an ambush by New People's Army rebels in Mulanay, Quezon.

"After the initial shock, one of my immediate fears was how to continue the schooling of my children. My salary as a public school teacher would not surely cope with the expenses. It would be really hard for me," she said in her vivid recollection of that moment.

The two soldiers were going to cut bamboos for the construction of a patrol base in the area when more than 10 rebels fired at them.

On June 9, Virginia, her three children Mark, 15; Joy, 14; and Christine, 12, and three other widows and orphans of fallen soldiers from the Southern Luzon Command witnessed the signing of a memorandum of agreement between the Armed Forces of the Philippines Educational Benefit System (AFPEBS) and at least six colleges and universities here.

The battlecry of MOA signatories: "Leave no soldier's orphan behind."

The MOA, signed in simple rites at the Queen Margarette Hotel and Restaurant here, aims to provide scholarship to qualified dependents of government soldiers, particularly the orphans of those who were killed in action.

"The scholarship program will be a great help for the soldier's widows and orphans," Virginia said.

Solcom spokesperson Maj. Jose Broso said the MOA was only the first of many educational partnerships between the AFPEBS and several colleges and universities in the Southern Tagalog and Bicol regions.

The initial participating schools are Calayan Educational Foundation Inc., Columbus College, Manuel S. Enverga University Foundation, Maryhill College, Sacred Heart College of Lucena and St. Anne College of Lucena.

Under the program, the schools commit to provide the qualified dependents of military personnel with partial tuition discounts or complete scholarship in any baccalaureate degree, except nursing and post-graduate studies.

The program takes effect this school year 2006-2007.

Solcom chief Lt. Gen. Pedro Cabuay Jr. said more than 700 soldiers assigned in different parts of the country have died in battles, leaving behind thousands of orphans.

"Though nothing compensates for the loss of a loved one's life, indeed I feel grateful to the Armed Forces of the Philippines, as it does not falter in its commitment to support the dependents who have been left behind by our fallen soldiers," Cabuay said in his speech.

The AFPEBS was established in 2000 and has since extended educational support to thousands of military dependents across the country.

The scholarship will be extended first to dependents of combat casualties and non-combat casualties followed by soldiers with disabilities sustained in battle, and finally to dependents of personnel in the active service. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Free state college opens in Batangas

BATANGAS CITY—THE COLEGIO NG Lungsod ng Batangas (CLB), the first free state college in Batangas City, was officially opened last Monday at the Quezon Memorial Stadium along De Las Alas Drive in Barangay 20.

The school aims to provide quality education to poor but deserving students of the city, and to qualify, the estimated income bracket of family should not exceed P100,000 annually, according to lawyer Teodulfo Deguito, college administrator.

The programs being offered include Bachelor Science in Elementary Education, BS Commerce Major in Business Management, 2-year Diploma for Computer Programming and 2-year Diploma for Computer Technician.

The initial enrollment this semester reached 320, evenly distributed to the four courses with 80 students each.

These students underwent a series of examinations, interviews and investigations in the admission procedure. As scholars, they need to maintain a grade point average of at least 2.75 in all subjects per semester to be admitted in succeeding years.

Mayor Eduardo Dimacuha, three other members and a secretary will compose the college board of regents.

Dr. Angelito Bagui, doctoral graduate of business administration, will act as the dean of instruction while Deguito, city legal officer, will act as the college administrator.

City administrator Felipe Baroja will act as college registrar while city mayor secretary Luz Amparo, as college secretary.

There are eight full-time faculty members to teach the students, each carrying a full load of 21 units this semester.

All school expenses will be funded by the government, except the uniforms, which the students will be required to wear later, Bagui said. *Marlon Alexander S. Luistro, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

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INQUIRER Mindanao

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DIVING INTO HISTORY

The Seawolf and the Sagami Maru

SHARP

For fresh, bacteria-free clothes, who needs the sun?

Sharp's Silver Ion Technology kills bacteria like the sun.

By Carlos R. Munda Jr.
Contributor

THE PHILIPPINES IS A WRECK diver's and history buff's dream.

From the Battle of Manila Bay, where the US Navy smashed the Spanish armada, to the attack on Coron in Palawan that sank a flotilla of Japanese ships and the Battle of Leyte Gulf, the largest naval engagement in history—our waters have been littered with shipwrecks.

But more than just battles between whole navies, there are little-known dramas among individual vessels that in themselves make for some very interesting sea stories—and for the intrepid wreck diver, amazing dive experiences.

One such tale is about the USS Seawolf and the Sagami Maru. Launched in 1939 from opposite ends of the Pacific Ocean, their saga continued through several encounters, finally ending violently in the Davao Gulf.

While from the start, the Seawolf was made for battle, the way to war for the Sagami Maru began differently. Once the pride of Nippon Yushen Keisha Shipping Line of Japan, the Sagami had a crew of 68 and silk-lined rooms for VIP passengers. At its prime, gleaming china and silverware carrying the flag and life preserver logo of NYK symbolized the civilian affluence to which the ship was born. In death, it was its new adornment of guns and war paint that people who saw it last remembered.

Hunter and hunted

The first encounter between the two ships happened on Feb. 19, 1942 just off the Badung Strait. Lt. Cdr. Frederick B. Warder on board the Seawolf sighted the Sagami and went in for a surface attack. After firing two torpedoes and missing, the hunter fast became the hunted. In the ensuing melee, the Sagami was able to make good its escape.

Nine months later, at dawn of Nov. 3, 1942, Warder was peering through his periscope over the Davao Gulf when he spotted the Japanese prize that had escaped him.

The attack began with Warder's first of three torpedo runs. Approaching from the surface, he was met with a hale of fire from the Japanese deck guns. Despite the danger, the Seawolf pressed on, sending several more "fishes" into the Sagami which finally silenced its guns and critically wounded it.

Soon, the Japanese flags that just that morning flew atop the masts were down—marking the end of a worthy ship.

Lost at sea

Even as that day severed the ties of the Sagami to the war in the Philippines, the Seawolf went on to play a bigger role in the struggle. Eventually, its luck also ran out and the ship was lost at sea on its way to Samar, with all hands, including several Filipino Army rangers. To this day, the real cause for its loss has never been ascertained, but what is beyond question is its contribution to the cause of liberation.

Today, while the Seawolf remains "on eternal patrol"—a designation for subs that have been lost for unknown causes—its old adversary still lies in a murky grave off the coast of Davao.

And 63 years after it sank, a new breed of Davaoeños is rediscovering the Sagami—not why it was built or used, but as it has become a watery gateway to our past.

To dive the Sagami is to go into the heart of Philippine history. It is not a dive that should be done without the right gas mixes, equipment, training and frame of mind; to do so would be foolish and not worth the risks. On the Sagami, the delights, just as the dangers, begin topside and are multiplied as one penetrates deeper into the ship.

As the site is heavily silted, visibility can go from a few feet to zero in seconds. Outside the ship, one can usually spot the huge turtle that makes its home near the bow and the school of dogtooth tunas that circle the mast once topped by the Rising Sun.

Within its holds, under 300 feet of water, trucks and motorcycles await to be unloaded, and the galley floor is littered with porcelain dinnerware and amber beer bottles buried in fine mud.

THE USS Seawolf is shown docked after it was launched in 1939. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

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Baguio starts fund drive to preserve original RP flag

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—THE CITY government is launching a fund drive to preserve the country's first flag, which has been under the care of the Baguio-based heirs of the late Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo since his death in 1964.

Mayor Braulio Yaranon, 87, saw the relic for the first time on Thursday at the Emilio Aguinaldo Museum here. He was accompanied by Emilio Aguinaldo Suntay III, the general's great grandson.

Suntay's grandmother, Cristina, who lives here, inherited the flag from her father after the family discovered it hidden on Aguinaldo's death bed. She built the museum in 1985 to house the artifact.

Yaranon, a former city secretary in the 1950s before he spent a career as regional trial court judge in La Union, said he never had an inkling that the "most important artifact" in the country was in his jurisdiction.

The flag, whose most striking feature is the face sewn on the banner's sun, had never obtained official recognition from the government because historians were still debating its authenticity.

The family obtained consultancy support from the Smithsonian Institute during the Philippine centennial celebration, but the chemicals and technological hardware necessary to protect the relic from moisture or theft are too expensive, according to the family.

But Yaranon said he would seek a council resolution that would give the flag its first official acknowledgment, while the government sought support from various embassies to keep the tattered fabric intact.

He said the government could write the Spanish and American Embassies on the Suntay family's behalf because these countries are historically linked to the Aguinaldo legacy.

Yaranon said he would also request help from the embassies of Mexico and Cuba, which were both colonies of the United States when it bought the Philippines from Spain to end the Spanish-American war.

He said he was convinced that the relic is the genuine first flag.

"The materials, the colors ... there's nothing I can see here that would make me doubt that this is the real [original] flag, which [Aguinaldo commissioned] in Hong Kong, and which was raised on June 12, 1898 when he declared Philippine independence," Yaranon said.

The flag's fabric is torn and much of the net-encased material is discolored but it retains the recognizable features of the original banner. The fabric's blue color is paler than the contemporary flag.

Yaranon said he wanted to put the flag on the map, by promoting it alongside the summer capital.

BAGUIO City Mayor Braulio Yaranon (right) finally saw the original flag after five decades in public service. Emilio Aguinaldo Suntay III, grandson of the late Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo, presents Yaranon his first taste of the relic on Thursday, as the city prepares to make the museum the official Independence Day venue for Baguio. EV ESPIRITU/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

He said government's failure to recognize the relic is "an oversight." "But I'm sure [President Macapagal-Arroyo] would be interested in protecting our history," he said.

11 environment employees in GenSan City suspended

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—MAYOR Pedro Acharon Jr. has suspended the 11 employees of the city Environment and Natural Resources Office (Enro), who were caught harvesting corals from Sarangani Bay.

The bay is a protected seascape.

On Wednesday, Acharon signed the memorandum detailing the suspension of Theresa Garay, action officer of Kagandahan-Gensan, and 10 other employees.

Acharon did not specify how long the suspension will last.

He maintained that Garay's trip to Tinoto village in Maasim, where she extracted 24 different kinds of corals, was not sanctioned by the city.

Acharon said Garay and her companions also illegally used a government vehicle because they failed to secure a trip ticket.

Acharon said Garay and her group violated Republic Act 6713 or the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for government officials and employees.

As this developed, the Sarangani government filed charges against Garay and her companions before the Ombudsman Mindanao.

The bases used by the provincial legal office in filing the charges were RA 6713, Fisheries Code of the Philippines and the National Integrated Protected Area System (Nipas).

Corals are a protected marine species because they play a major role in fish population.

Marine biologist Kent Dequito of the Sarangani Provincial Agriculture office said hard corals are not plants but hermatypic or reef-building animals called polyps.

He added that their characteristics are similar to other species under the animal kingdom.

Corals utilize oxygen for their metabolic process and give off carbon dioxide and ammonia as waste product, which help marine plant species to grow. These marine plants become food for fish.

Dequito said the corals harvested by Garay's group were between five to 10 years old based on their size and structure.

In Butuan City, the National Democratic Front (NDF) here said that illegal logging activities in Caraga would continue unless a ranking environment official was removed from office.

Cesar Renerio, spokesperson of the NDF-North Central Mindanao, said illegal logging activities have flourished in the region because of the unholy alliance between Environment director Benjamin Tumaliuan, log smugglers, politicians, police and military officers.

Renerio said during the past four years, about P700 million worth of hot logs were brought out of the region with Tumaliuan's blessings.

But Tumaliuan laughed off Renerio's allegations. "If they have complaints, then they should lodge it in the proper venue, before a court, so I can answer it," Tumaliuan said.

It was not the first time that allegations he conspired with illegal loggers hounded Tumaliuan.

Earlier, a tribal leader also claimed that Tumaliuan had received bribe money from loggers.

"In the 4-year stint of Tumaliuan, about 100,000 cubic meters of logs have slipped away," Renerio said. ***Aquiles Z. Zonio and Franklin A. Caliguid, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Davao farmer leader's slay case still unsolved, cops say

DAVAO CITY—POLICE AUTHORITIES in Davao del Norte have not considered the murder of peasant leader Enrico Cabanit solved even with the death of the alleged gunman.

Davao del Norte police chief Senior Supt. Jaime Morente said they were trying to uncover the motive behind Cabanit's assassination and who ordered it.

"We cannot close the case because it has not yet been solved," Morente said.

He said the police believed that Monching Solon, the alleged gunman, could not have acted on his own.

Solon, a notorious gun for hire, was found dead in General Santos City more than a week ago.

Initial police theory indicated that Cabanit, who was gunned down in Panabo City on April 24, was killed because of his active campaign for land reform. He had just come from a dialogue involving peasants and agrarian reform officials when shot dead.

At the time of his death, his group, the Pambansang Ugnayan ng mga Nagsasariling Lokal na Organisasyon sa Kanayunan (Unorka) in Mindanao, was claiming a huge track of land being cultivated by a banana company owned by the family of Rep. Antonio Floirendo.

"He struggled for the full implementation of the comprehensive agrarian reform program and up until his death, he was hoping although there was a little frustration, that the poor will be given lands," Rosauro Tapal, Unorka chair, said.

Richard Uajan, lawyer for the Floirendos, said his clients should not be implicated in the death of the 54-year old peasant leader.

"The Floirendos did not have a quarrel with the victim. We are saddened by this incident and we welcome any investigation about this," Uajan said.

Uajan said the Floirendos also wanted the killing of Cabanit solved "at the soonest time possible."

As this developed, human rights advocates, including those from foreign countries, arrived in Davao del Norte to dig deeper into the Cabanit killing.

The group, which has the backing of Amnesty International, wanted to investigate if Cabanit's death had something to do with problems hounding the implementation of agrarian reform in the said province.

Belinda Formanes, executive director of the Partnership for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development Services Inc., said the "mastermind" was apparently motivated because of Cabanit's stance on land reform.

Cabanit was the seventh peasant leader killed in Mindanao since 2004. *Dennis Jay C. Santos, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

MEMBERS of Unorka rally in front of Camp Crame to air their demand for justice for their slain leader Ric Cabanit. JOAN BONDOC

Fishkill in Taal villages destroys ₱2.75-M tilapia

CALAMBA CITY—ALMOST A month after typhoon "Caloy" damaged their main source of livelihood, fisherfolk in San Nicolas and Agoncillo towns in Batangas are facing another problem: A fishkill destroyed more than 35 metric tons of *tilapia* worth almost P2.75 million in the past two days, the INQUIRER learned on Friday.

Most affected are 11 lakeshore communities around Taal Lake.

San Nicolas Mayor Napoleon Arceo said more than 30 metric tons of *tilapia*, including fingerlings inside 10 fish cages were destroyed when the fishkill started on Thursday afternoon.

"The residents reported that they suddenly saw the dead fishes on the surface of the water," Arceo said in a mobile phone interview.

He said a sudden change in temperature caused the fishkill.

Among the affected barangays were Poblacion, Abilo, Bangkor, Maabud North, Pansipit, Kalayag and Bangin.

Arceo said tilapia breeding farms along the Pansipit River were also badly affected by the fishkill.

Agoncillo Mayor Glorioso Martinez said five metric tons of *tilapia* in two fish pens in Barangays Pansipit and Pook were gone after the fishkill.

He said the municipal agriculture office told him that a sudden discharge of hydrogen sulfide caused the fishkill.

The discharge of hydrogen sulfide was a natural phenomenon caused by change in wind patterns, he said.

"This fishkill really hurt us because our people have yet to recover from the destruction brought by typhoon 'Caloy,'" Martinez said in a phone interview.

He said P650 million worth of fish stocks were wiped out by the typhoon.

Arceo said in San Nicolas, 150 fish cages were destroyed when "Caloy" wrought havoc last month.

Early this year, a fishkill destroyed a total of P161 million worth of fishes in Taal Lake in the vicinity of Talisay town. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

DAR speeds up land reform in Negros Occidental

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—NEGROS OCCIDENTAL now has two provincial agrarian reform officers (Paro) to speed up the implementation of land reform in the province.

Department of Agrarian Reform Regional Director Alexis Arsenal on Wednesday announced that Felicidad Bañares is the Paro assigned to northern Negros Occidental covering the areas from Bacolod City to San Carlos City while Stephen Leonidas is assigned to the south, from Bago City to Hinobaan town.

Arsenal said five additional survey teams have also been sent to the province to fast track land reform work.

He said the DAR move was necessary because they still have a lot of areas to cover and problems to resolve in the province.

Bañares earlier said the total area for land reform coverage in the province is 246,463.9 hectares, with 153,048 ha so far distributed. The DAR has 83,693 ha more to cover, she said.

Leonidas said their target in the province for this year is to distribute 22,000 ha to farmer-beneficiaries.

The agrarian reform program is scheduled to end in 2008 but President Macapagal-Arroyo was expected to ask Congress to extend it for another five years.

DAR Undersecretary for Field Operations Narciso Nieto on Tuesday met with farmer leaders demanding the cancellation of Stock Distribution Options (SDOs) in farms in the province and a review of the corporative scheme on the properties of businessman Eduardo Cojuangco.

The farmer leaders told Nieto the SDOs adopted in farms in Negros Occidental have failed to uplift their lives, which is the original intent of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program.

Leonidas said a DAR task force from Manila would investigate the call of farmers groups for the cancellation of nine SDOs in the province.

The petitions to cancel their SDOs were filed in March.

Also questioned at the meeting with Nieto was the SDO of Wuhtrich Hermanos Inc. in Barangay Buenavista, Calatrava, with 174 ha and 177 beneficiaries.

PETITIONERS FOR THE CANCELLATION OF STOCK DISTRIBUTION OPTION

- 30 farmers at Archie Fishponds Inc. in Cadiz City, with an area of 102 ha and 155 beneficiaries
- 31 farmers at Arsenio Al Acuña Agricultural Corp. in Cadiz City, with 108 ha and 93 beneficiaries
- 66 for Elenita Agricultural Development Corp. in Cadiz City with 113 ha and 82 beneficiaries
- 30 for Maria Clara Marine Ventures in Bago City with 58 ha and 58 beneficiaries;
- 90 for Palma Kabankalan Agricultural Corp. of Ilog with 219 ha and 113 beneficiaries.

All five farms are under the Arsenio Al Acuna Agricultural Corp.

- 63 farmers of the SVJ Farms in Concepcion, Talisay City with 170 ha and 143 beneficiaries
- 65 farmer of the Negros Industrial By-Products and Processing Inc. in Nagasi, La Carlota with 438 ha and 273 beneficiaries

ROUNDUP

1 cop slain in shootout

VIRAC, Catanduanes—A policeman was killed and another wounded after three unidentified gunmen, suspected to be New People's Army rebels, engaged them in a shootout in Sta. Maria, Panganiban on Thursday evening. PO2 Ferdinand Bobiles died from multiple bullet wounds in the chest while PO1 Ramon Balatero suffered injuries at the elbow. A police report said the three gunmen were sitting behind a fence at the town plaza a few steps away from the police station when they were accosted by Bobiles. However, the three eluded arrest and run to the direction of Barangay Sta. Maria. The Police Provincial Mobile Group engaged the gunmen in a running gunbattle, where Bobiles was killed, according to the police. *Feman Gianan, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

No bomb at capitol

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—Operations at the provincial capitol was back to normal shortly before noon on Friday after bomb experts declared the building safe. First Lt. Mike Aguilar, chief of the explosives ordinance division of the Philippine Air Force's 740th Combat Wing, said their operatives scoured the building after two packages suspected of having bomb devices were found inside separate trash bins outside the building early Thursday night. Aguilar said what they found was not a bomb but a glass bottle wrapped in packaging tape and metal wires. Earlier, an unidentified person called the provincial board office and warned that a bomb has been planted in the building. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

2 men killed over land

LINGAYEN, Pangasinan—Two men were killed while another was wounded on Thursday when armed men shot it out with Army soldiers and policemen patrolling the hotly-contested Pindangan estate in Alcala town, police said. The armed men who, police said, could be hired by two warring clans claiming the 491-hectare estate, fired at the lawmen at about 9 a.m. When the smoke cleared, two men were found dead in the cornfields while another was taken to the hospital for treatment of bullet wounds, said deputy Pangasinan police director Supt. Noli Taliño. The dead were Felipe Galleno and Rogelio Montero while the wounded was Armando Lacerna. Four members of the armed group surrendered to the police. The Supreme Court has ruled that the estate, which has been disputed since the early 1920s, belongs to the government and will be distributed to legitimate claimants. *Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Banaue school robbed

BAGUIO CITY—An Ifugao high school lost this year's enrollment proceeds to robbers. Reports from the Cordillera police said the robbers ransacked the principal's office of the Immaculate Conception High School in Banaue town on June 3. They took away P200,000 and a check worth P9,549. Investigators said the school failed to remit the collections to the Banaue Savings Cooperative because the officer in charge did not report for work. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Toxic veggie kills 2

COTABATO CITY—A pesticide-laced vegetable a mother cooked for the family's dinner killed two children in Arakan, North Cotabato. The father, Bernie Moreno, told a local radio station on Saturday that his wife also vomited after eating *saluyot*, which their eldest child, Kimberly, picked up on her way home from school on Thursday. Moreno said his wife forgot to wash the vegetable, which they later learned was sprayed with pesticides. *Jeoffrey Maitem, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

"Dapat malaman ni Daddy na may mas titindi pa sa init ng Middle East."

Posible nang iparamdam kay Daddy ang init ng inyong pagmamahal sa

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A magical, mystical tour of Old Manila

Guided walks with lingering views of city's cultural icons, and food sampling besides

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE BEST WAY TO EXPLORE the city of Manila is by taking a walking tour.

The jeepneys and *calesas* that ply the streets offer an easier and more comfortable way to get around, but traveling on foot will enable one to see the city's cultural treasures that people often fail to notice, according to tour guide Ivan ManDy.

ManDy, who prefers to be called a "streetwalker," (*see related article in Tales of the City*) began offering walking tours of the city after a short trip to Singapore two years ago.

"People see more while traveling on foot instead of looking at the scenery from inside a tour bus," the 27-year-old guide told the INQUIRER.

Change in perception

Aptly named "Old Manila Walks," ManDy said the tour is aimed at changing people's perception of the 400-year-old city.

Instead of the usual day tours, which either confine travelers to the bus or rush them from one site to another, the Chinese-Filipino "streetwalker" bonds with everyone in his group during the two to four-hour activity.

"The walking tours are interactive. We all learn from each other," ManDy stressed, pointing out that 30 percent of those who sign up for Old Manila Walks are locals. The rest are tourists and expatriates.

"Some of the locals who wish to know more about the city share a thing or two regarding a particular cultural site," he said. "These little contributions make the tours livelier and more interesting."

Four choices

ManDy, who has lived his whole life in the city, said those who want to take the tour can choose from the following itineraries: The Big Binondo Food Wok; Mounds, Magnates and Mausoleums: A Chinese Cemetery Walk; Power, Palace and A Shot of Beer in San Miguel and finally, Walls of This Content: An Intramuros Walk.

"All of these areas have played a very significant part in my life," ManDy enthused. True enough, the chatty "streetwalker" spent his first eight years in Binondo and went to St. Jude Catholic School in San Miguel for his primary and secondary education.

He also worked as a guide at the Bahay Tsinoy in Intramuros, a museum of Chinese-Filipino history and culture, and regularly visits his great-grandparents who are buried at the Chinese Cemetery.

Both the Binondo and Intramuros tours cost P650 per person, inclusive of food and museum entrance fees, while the San Miguel tour costs P750 per head. Interested tourists and locals can avail of the Chinese Cemetery walk for P500 per person, ManDy said.

Artistic delights

The Far Eastern University campus on Nicanor Reyes Street (formerly Morayta) was recently added to the young tour guide's growing list of walks, with its "treasure trove of artistic delights by National Artists such as Pablo Antonio Sr., Vicente Manansala and Carlos "Botong" Francisco."

A CHINESE Catholic altar by the side of the road in Chinatown, Binondo.

"The FEU campus has the biggest concentration of Art Deco structures in the city," ManDy said.

Art Deco refers to a style of decorative art developed originally in the 1920s and revived in the 1960s. It is characterized by geometric motifs, curvilinear forms, sharply defined outlines and bold colors.

"Art Deco, also seen in the Metropolitan Theater in Lawton Plaza and Malate's Rizal Memorial Stadium, was how the people in the 1920s viewed the future," ManDy said.

History 101

He added that the Intramuros walk was ideal for "Philippine history beginners" while the San Miguel package showcases the district's beautiful period homes and churches.

But the 27-year-old tour guide is most famous for his "Big Binondo Food Wok," probably owing to his Chinese-Filipino roots.

Donning his pigtailed silk cap and "Chinoy costume," ManDy begins his tribute to the country's premier Chinatown by way of a four-hour walk through Binondo's streets.

The meeting place for those going on the tour is at the lobby of the Basilica de San Lorenzo or Binondo Church, a witness to the early Chinese Christians' devotion and piety.

"Both the Binondo and Sta. Cruz Churches, which we visit during the guided tour, have distinctive, eight-sided, pagoda-like bell towers," ManDy observed.

He noted that the number eight is considered lucky in Chinese culture because of its "flowing character" while pagodas—sacred pyramid-like temples—are a common sight on the mainland.

The group then proceeds to Ongpin Street, where a "guiltless food splurge" begins.

"Guiltless, because despite the

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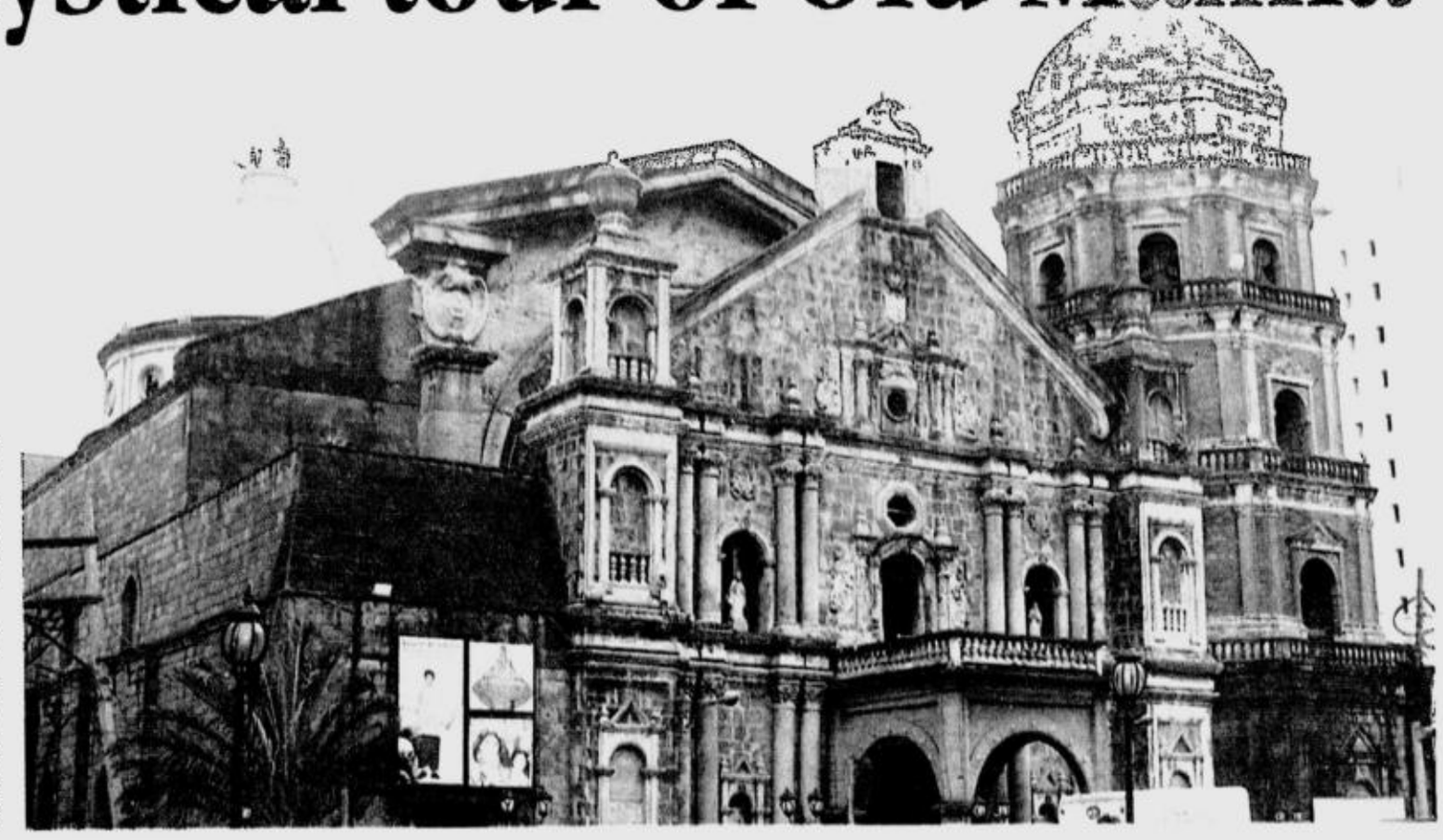

THE FIRST stop on the tour: the Binondo Church.
PHOTOS BY RODEL ROTONI

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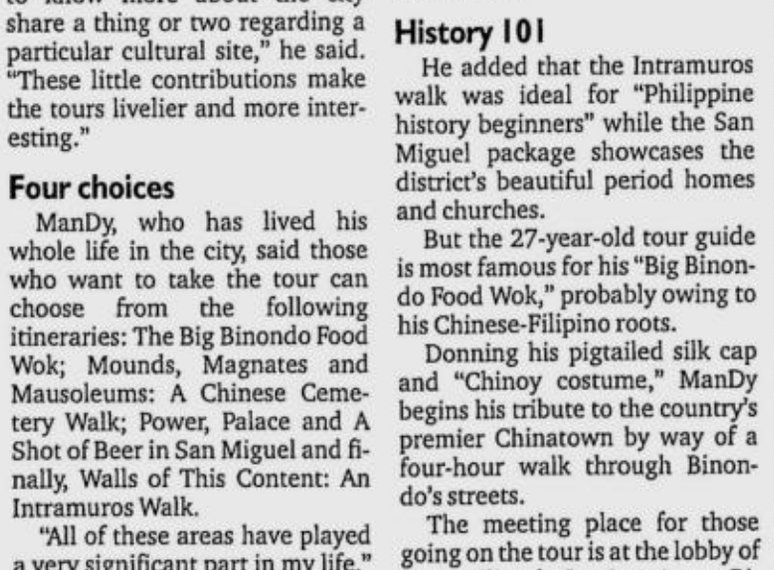

THE GATEWAY to Manila Chinatown.

This 'streetwalker' is proud of what he does

Tour guide Ivan ManDy's continuing love affair with the city of his affections

By Tina G. Santos

MANDY on one of his "quickie, short-time tours."

PHOTO BY RODEL ROTONI

HIS CURIOUS EYE LED HIM TO DISCOVER the delights within a city not exactly famous for its charm and exoticism.

For the past year-and-a-half, Chinese-Filipino Ivan ManDy has been taking a stroll through Old Manila's historic gems.

But he has not been alone in his travels. The 27-year-old has made it his personal mission to take curious and adventurous tourists—locals and foreigners alike—on a fun and educational tour of the city's historically and architecturally rich but often unappreciated places.

"I can't change the way Manila looks," he admitted. "But I can change the way you look at Manila."

Although commonly referred to as a tour guide, ManDy prefers to be called a "streetwalker," the meaning of which initially took him by surprise.

After one of his tours, ManDy said he saw two American women in a corner, giggling while looking at the pin he was wearing that said "Streetwalker on Tour." When they told him what the word meant, ManDy was dumbfounded, but nevertheless decided to stick with the title since he believes it is a perfect description of what he does.

'Quickie, short-time tour'

"A lot of people know it means 'prostitute', I did not," he told the INQUIRER. "Today when people ask me what I do as a streetwalker, I tell them I do a quickie, four-hour, short-time tour around Old Manila, and it always gets a laugh."

The 27-year-old chatty streetwalker works as an operations manager of a trading company on weekdays. But on weekends, he dons either his *salakot* (native hat) or his pigtailed silk cap and "Chinoy costume."

"I got the idea when I joined walking tours abroad," he said, referring to his costume. "I do it to make the walk more interesting. This way, the tourists feel that their guide is a native of that city and that he's proud of it."

ManDy said his career as a streetwalker started as a hobby deeply rooted in his "love affair" with the city since he was a kid.

While his friends and cousins were playing with Transformers and GI Joes, ManDy was busy reading and collecting history and architectural books.

Hooked on history

"I was a geek," he said, laughing. "I loved those robot cars and cartoons but somewhere along the way, I got hooked on history, architectural books and cultural stuff, which was kind of odd for children my age at that time."

He added that his interest particularly zeroed in on the history of Binondo, the Tsinoy community where he was born and grew up in.

By the time he was brave enough to wander around, ManDy often walked by himself on the streets of Binondo, taking notice of the numerous colonial homes which dotted the district.

During his teenage years, ManDy enjoyed exploring different museums more than going to the malls.

Not a mall rat

"I used to drag my friends to museums," he said. "Whenever we conducted community service like visiting orphanages, I would always suggest that we take the kids to the museums rather than malls."

The industrial design course he took up at the De La Salle University-College of Saint Benilde may have had no direct relation to streetwalking, but ManDy claimed it helped strengthen his personal interest in the arts.

"I learned to 'see' the architectural reasons behind certain things and relate it to how our city and culture evolved in its four centuries of existence," he said.

Even though he did not take up special studies to become a streetwalker, ManDy claimed the seven years he had spent working as a volunteer guide at Bahay Tsino, a museum of Filipino-Chinese history and culture at the Intramuros, definitely worked to his advantage.

"Whenever we had academic visitors, I was always in charge of showing them around," he said.

TALES OF THE CITY

From hobby to job

It was also while working at the museum that he stumbled upon a trip that eventually made him decide to turn his hobby into a serious enterprise a few years later.

"I love traveling and have joined city walks in some of the places I have visited, but it wasn't until I joined-and-got hooked on a walking tour in Singapore that I realized that it could be done in Manila. After all, Manila is a city twice the age of Singapore," he said.

The fourth in a brood of six, Binondo-born and bred ManDy brought history to life by actually pounding the pavements where it all happened as he began organizing walking tours he aptly called "Old Manila Walks" soon after he came back from his trips abroad.

"I see Manila as an extension of my passion as a museum guide, I consider the whole city as a living museum," he said. "And besides, it's a place that is more than 400 years old, surely, it has enough stories for Filipinos to learn, live and be amused by!"

Putting the walk together came easy for ManDy as he focused on places close to his heart and identity—the Binondo and San Miguel districts, Intramuros and the Chinese Cemetery.

"It's also about making sense, by way of cultural history, what it means to be living in Manila and perhaps, rubbing in a little 'pride of place' to Metro Manileños themselves," he added.

From a family of three who joined him on his first tour to the Chinese cemetery, around 20 to 25 people now sign up for his tours.

"The biggest walk I had was for 160 people, but I'm not doing it again. You don't get the same effect as you would if you have a mid-sized group, so now I'm trying to keep the tours as intimate as possible," he said.

Tours for all ages

The oldest person to join his tour was a man in his 70s while the youngest was a month-old baby who slept all throughout the four-hour Binondo tour.

During his tours, ManDy said he makes it a point to show his guests not only the best of what the city has to offer.

"It's a no-holds-barred introduction to Manila, warts and all. I show them everything, even the not-so-pleasant ones. They may not be your ideal tourist sites, but these patches, like the *esteros* of Chinatown or the slums beside the Chinese cemetery, are part and parcel of our city's evolutionary fabric, and they do have their own stories to tell, too," he explained.

ManDy said he also gives his guests insights on even the most trivial things: a neighborhood street and historic street name that nobody pays attention to, a piece of ruin from the Spanish colonial period, or that old mami house—details that give Manila her unique identity.

While ManDy considers the Binondo tour the most popular, he said the San Miguel route is the most "highly politicized" since it is where Malacañang Palace is located.

Scolded by the PSG

ManDy recalled how he was reprimanded by members of the Presidential Security Group during one of his San Miguel tours when he took the group inside the Palace complex.

"It so happened that they were on red alert at the time. Suddenly, there I was holding a microphone with some 40 people in tow going inside the Palace grounds. They scolded me like a school boy right in front of all the people. Now, I rarely do tours in the area because of the political situation," he said.

Apart from some women wearing high-heeled shoes, ManDy said the city's basic infrastructure, including ill-maintained sidewalks, pollution and missing or changing street names, are the common problems he usually encounter when conducting the walks.

A member of the Heritage Conservation Society, ManDy said he finds fulfillment in helping people realize that Manila "is more than just a cultural wasteland, a third world city pretending to be first world, but rather a place that is inextricably linked to the Filipino's cultural identity."

"It's worth my time," ManDy answered when asked if doing the tours were financially rewarding.

Well-fed mind and soul

Comments from guests claiming that after the tour, they were "very well-fed, both mind and soul" make all his efforts worthwhile, he added.

At the end of each tour, ManDy said he is hoping that those who joined it walk away not just with smile on their faces, but more importantly, a better appreciation of the city.

(Visit www.oldmanilawalks.com or e-mail oldmanilawalks@gmail.com or call 0917-3291622 for details about the tours.)

METROBRIEFS

Dry Parañaque

THE PARAÑAQUE City government will hold a special session next week to ensure that residents are prepared should an earthquake hit the city. The National Water Resources Board has warned that an Intensity 6 earthquake could cause the collapse of the soil in some parts of the city, partly due to the over extraction of underground water in areas which lack adequate water supply. Right now, more than 100 villages and subdivisions in Parañaque rely on motorized deep wells. Nelson Lacambra, the spokesperson of Mayor Florencio Bernabe, said a Water Crisis Task Force has been formed to look for alternative sources of water, especially in BF Homes, which has about 10,000 homeowners. Recently, members of the task force met with officials of the NWRB, Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System and Maynilad Water Services Inc. to help solve the problem. ***Jocelyn R. Uy***

2 suspects nabbed

TWO illegal recruiters who duped several prospective overseas workers of P700,000 were arrested by agents of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) in Pasay City last Wednesday. NBI acting director Nestor Mantaring identified the suspects as Jose "Pepe" Eligado, of Andrew Street, and Jocelyn Ranque, of 183 Shaw Boulevard, both in Pasay City. The two face charges for violating the Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipino Act of 1995, Mantaring said. Investigation conducted by the NBI Special Action Unit (SAU) headed by Assistant Regional Director Vicente De Guzman showed that the case stemmed from a complaint filed by Mary Jane Villaluz, Catherine Tamo, and four other victims recruited to work in New Zealand and Macau, China. The four were asked to pay around P40,000 each in processing fees. Eligado went with 14 complainants to Macau but left them on their own after failing to keep his end of the bargain. Villaluz and Tamo, who were recruited for employment in New Zealand, later sought the POEA's assistance after the suspects demanded P25,000 from them. The suspects were arrested while receiving marked money from the victims in a fast food restaurant, De Guzman said. ***Margaux C. Ortiz***

A magical, mystical tour of Old Manila

From page A19

seemingly endless intake of food during the whole tour, we end up burning them all through the four-hour walk," ManDy said, grinning.

"Besides, food makes the trip more interesting. It's a big part of making history alive," he enthusiastically added.

Food trip

ManDy said the group drops by hole-in-the-wall restaurants that serve authentic hand-rolled Chinese lumpia, pancit noodles, tea-cooked eggs, Hokkien-style fried rice (*kiampeng*) and Northeast dumplings.

The route also includes the last chocolate shop in Tondo which shows workers making *tablea* (chocolate tablets) the traditional way. Also on the itinerary are a Chinese wedding store, and a Buddhist temple (Te Ya Kong) on Kipuja Street.

SOME of the food on the menu when you go on the Big Binondo Food Wok tour: "*tablea*" or chocolate tablets (below) and Hokkien-style fried rice with iced coffee.

PHOTOS BY RODEL ROTONI

"I also point out some old Chinoy houses in the district that have withstood time, the ground floors of which are usually made of stone while the second floors are built with wood," ManDy said, explaining that the materials used enabled the houses to "sway" during earthquakes.

Historical sites

Binondo, few people know, have also been home to historical figures. ManDy said Doña Teodora Alonso Realonda, the mother of national hero Jose Rizal, once lived on San Fernando Street in Binondo.

Rizal's father, Don Francisco Mercado Rizal, lived on Estraude Street, he added.

"Both houses are now gone, with only historical markers taking their place," the tour guide noted, explaining that Doña Teodora's old home was razed by a fire in 1997.

Apart from the Binondo walk, ManDy is equally popular for conducting tours at the Chinese Cemetery.

"The Chinese Cemetery is actually an architectural jewel because it was among the few places in the city that were not bombed during World War II," he said.

Pinoy, not Chinoy

He explained that the beautiful, elaborate mausoleums in the area were actually adaptations of the local culture and not, as commonly perceived, part of the Chinese tradition.

"People would think that the mausoleums are ostentatious, their owners show-offs," ManDy said. But he pointed out that most of the structures, which have their own bathrooms and rest areas, are not found in China.

"These burial chambers were built to accommodate the local tradition of honoring the dead on *Todos Los Santos* (All Saints Day and All Souls Day), which have become social events, with people even spending the night at the cemeteries," ManDy said.

Apart from the elaborate mausoleums, tourists can also visit a turtle-shaped plot, an ancient Chinese burial mound, and the Chong Hock Tong temple which is the oldest Chinese temple in the Philippines, according to ManDy.

He also disclosed that noodle king Ma Mon Luk and a number of Filipino-Chinese war heroes and martyrs were interred at the Chinese Cemetery.

"A lot of people love to bash the city for different reasons," the 27-year-old tour guide explained. "Through Old Manila Walks, we wish to show everyone that Manila may not be the best planned city in the world, but looking beyond the pollution and traffic, it certainly is a culture-filled destination," he said.

OTHER stops in the tour: The Chinese cemetery (top) and a Buddhist Temple.

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This section is dedicated to Filipinos overseas toiling on land and at sea, in factories, in construction sites and in the homes of the world, and wherever work can be contracted to secure a better life for their families. These are their stories.

Filipinos have the run of this Saudi hotel

They all look familiar, from the cooks to the interior designer to the bellboys to the manager

By Fe B. Zamora

AL-KHOBAR, KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA—Al-Hammad Hotel here has a Filipino general manager, Filipino cook, Filipino chief of maintenance (who doubles as interior designer) and Filipino bellboys and waiters it seems just like home.

The Filipino air is everywhere: A *kababayan* hands you the key to your room, and when you order room service, you can hear Filipinos in the background yelling unsolicited culinary tips.

One of the first Filipinos to work in the hotel, Ramiro Clavel was hired as construction laborer in 1981. He learned carpentry, painting, cabinet making and interior designing at the hotel, where he is now chief of maintenance.

A native of Pangasinan, Clavel, 49, speaks Arabic and Egyptian which he learned from conversation with his employer and coworkers.

Greatest achievement

Joey Dizon started working in the Middle East in 1982 as bartender, waiter, cook and supervising cook for 3,000 US soldiers during the Gulf War.

A native of Pampanga, Dizon, now 53, is the hotel chef who would graciously cook *sinigang, tinapang bangus* and even *sisig* to homesick Filipinos.

The hotel manager, Ogie Baltazar, hails from Baliwag, Bulacan. From Bulacan also comes waiter Leo Valerio, who started working just three months ago.

Over a million Filipinos work in Saudi Arabia, making it a top destination for OFWs.

Like most OFWs, Dizon said they work here to be able to send their children to school, buy a house and lot and invest in a business once they retire from overseas employment.

Dizon said he has sent four children through college; his youngest son, Jeffrey, 17, has just graduated from high school. He has also improved the old family home, and has even built another one.

"My children's education, that's my greatest achievement," he said.

Now, Dizon said he is saving for a burger machine so he could start a business in Manila.

Clavel said he also ventured into overseas employment to have a better life for his family.

"I have spent more time here than with my children," Clavel, who plans to retire after another two-year contract, told the INQUIRER.

Clavel's eldest son is an electrical engineer, and a daughter is a teacher, while the third child dropped out of college. He also built a house for his family, and had even supported two siblings through college.

But his long years abroad also took a toll on his marriage.

Heart-to-heart talk

According to him, married OFWs "should have a heart-to-heart talk" before even deciding to venture abroad.

When the marriage broke, Clavel said he just concentrated on his work in the hotel.

"It was hard," he said. "My family was my inspiration, and without a family was like losing the reason for working."

Clavel said he asked his sibling to raise his three children. "I continued sending money for their education," he said. He stayed on even during the Gulf War in 1991 when OFWs were asked to go home.

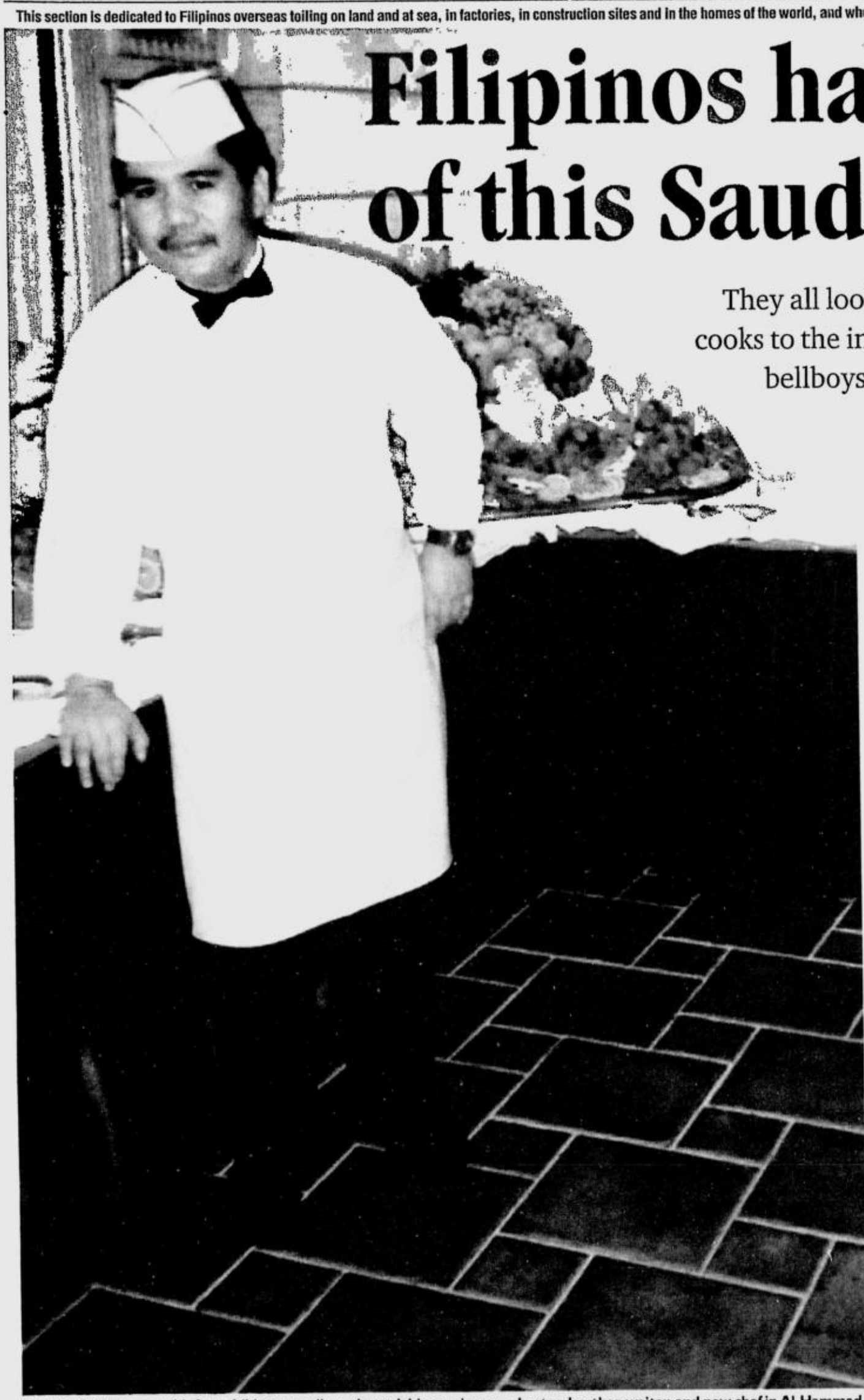
"If I go home, what will I do in the Philippines?" he said.

But Clavel now has a reason to come home. In the late 90s, his brother gave him a pen pal named Athanasia, who was also from Dagupan.

Clavel had his first marriage annulled, then married Athanasia with whom he has a son, John Christopher.

Clavel said his new wife is a "good mother and a good businesswoman."

"Just another two-year contract, and am home for good," he said.



JOEY DIZON has sent his four children to college through his earnings as a bartender, then waiter, and now chef in Al-Hammad Hotel. He is saving up to put up a burger machine in Manila.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

WELCOME to Al-Hammad Hotel in Al-Khobar, kingdom of overseas Filipino culinary and tourism workers.

What to wear in Riyadh

By Fe B. Zamora

IF YOU DON'T WANT TO GET INto trouble with the *mutaween* (religious police), bring an abaya with you to Saudi Arabia.

An abaya is a loose, flowing garment that you have to wear over your *maong* and T-shirt whenever you go out from your residence.

The abaya must cover the whole body, except the feet and the hands. It is also worn with a scarf to cover the hair and a *niqab*, the face veil that covers the nose, mouth, cheeks and chin.

Some Muslim women even wear gloves, stockings and a thin, gauzy black veil to cover the eyes when they go out.

If you are going to Riyadh, a traditional black abaya with black scarf for your hair and part of your face, is a must. The niqab, gloves, stockings are optional.

The black abaya is also a must in Jeddah, Damman, Al-Khobar, Dharan and other areas; but the head scarf can be in pastels, and not necessarily black.

The abaya is a religious attire as much as it is part of the Saudi culture. Wearing it while in Saudi shows respect for the country's religion and culture.

Some onlookers may find it ominous, but the abaya is actually comfortable to wear, or so I found out while wearing it for five days in Saudi. It even made me feel mysterious.

Filipino hotel employees at the Riyadh Palace Hotel gave me an abaya and matching scarf to wear, instead of just the caftan-type blouse and pants I had on when I arrived there to cover President Macapagal-Arroyo's state visit to the Kingdom last month.

AN ABAYA covers the whole body.

They were actually worried about the *mutaween*, who could make an arrest and send violators of Islam to jail without a trial.

Keep distance from males

For added measures, my concerned compatriots also told me how to behave while wearing the abaya: Avoid talking to men while on the streets, keep a proper distance from the all-male media delegations, which included Press Undersecretary Jose Capadocia, journalists Paolo Romero, Dave Cagahastian, Leo Sarne and Ralph Guzman of Philippine Star, Manila Bulletin, Radyo ng Bayan and GMA Channel 7; German Eser, Carlos de los Santos, Ronnie de Leon and Rod del Agua of Malacañang media support staff.

I kept my "proper distance" from the menfolk in public places; but once within confines of four walls, I quickly reverted to being one of the boys.

Like a puppy

In two days in Riyadh, I've seen just a group of three women crossing a street, two in the restaurant where Saudi information ministry officials feted us to dinner, and about 10 in the hotel lobby. I saw two women with children at the convenient store, where I was the lone (and scared) unescorted woman in the store with over a dozen male customers.

There were about a hundred women at the Philippine Embassy grounds to meet President Arroyo and the official party. Many of them were in Filipina dresses, which they promptly covered with the abaya on the way back to their homes and dormitories.

Such that I felt conspicuous while walking from the Chamber of Commerce building to the media center at the Riyadh Palace hotel, about five blocks away. Dressed in all-black, I must have looked like a lonesome black puppy finding its way around a concrete maze.

But I also felt safe under my long, flowing abaya. It was sweltering 40 degrees Celsius, but the wind was cool. Surprisingly, the fabric was also cool to my skin. I pulled my shawl to cover my hair and face, and laughed at myself, a woman in black walking five steps away from a group of men.

Three major reasons why OFWs opened world for RP

By Aurelio R. Montinola III

Editor's Note: *To put into context the vital and visionary role today of the Overseas Filipino Worker, we are running the following excerpts from the speech of the author as it captures the essence of what the OFW is all about in our country's development. It was delivered by the author, who is president of the Bank of Philippine Islands, at the Management Association of the Philippines last April. The entire speech was first published in the INQUIRER Business Monday, April 17, 2006.*

I WILL HAVE TO START WITH an Albert Einstein test question. Supposedly, he gave the same test to his graduate students at Princeton, and one confused student said: "Professor Einstein, these are the same questions you gave us last year." To which Einstein smiled, and said, "Yes, but the answers are different."

The OFW issue is similar to Einstein's test. Three decades ago, when Filipino migration began to accelerate, we coined the phrase "brain drain" to emphasize its phenomenon being inimical to national development.

Today, the answer is different, or at least mixed.

Why? There are three major reasons. First, there is globalization, which has brought the world's economies into closer integration. Second, there is the information revolution through the fax, the cell phone, the Internet, and even VOIP. Third, there are changing demographics as the developed countries find themselves with aging populations with job needs, which in turn developing countries (including the Philippines with a 21.6 years median age) fill with mobile jobseekers.

These tidal changes have transformed the 8 million overseas Filipinos into a powerful national force. They have opened the world literally for our people. They have increased many times over the earnings and remittances of overseas Filipinos. Perhaps, as never before, Filipino migration is now in a position to make a lasting contribution to the modernization of the country...

Zobel's 'brain gain'

The time for feeling guilty about our OFWs is over. We must shift gears and recognize the vital role they can play in national development and modernization.

The government and the private sector must therefore work together to pursue a strategic policy on labor migration that will eventually turn the current "Brain Drain" into, as Fernando Zobel has stated in another speech, a "Brain Gain." India today is the best example of its overseas nonresident Indians coming back to assist in specific technology locations and fields; if they can do it, why can't we dream the same?

While migrants' remittance reached record levels last year, we now have the more encouraging news that OFWs and their families are saving and investing more. If we can convince them to save and invest in the Philippines, as actually many of them are predisposed to do so at least partially, then even better.

We are constantly told that the Philippines by growing 5 percent GDP a year will at best stay flat. If we can utilize our OFW remittances and their corresponding savings or investment better, perhaps we can raise this to a more growth oriented 7 percent.

As a banker, I recognize the vital role that financial institutions must play in linking remittances to development. Large banks as well as community-based financial institutions should strive to provide products and services that encourage savings among OFWs and support their entrepreneurial ventures...

GOOD MANNERS AND PROPER CONDUCT
For those working or going to work in Hong Kong, Japan, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Italy and the United Kingdom, here is a set of handbooks to avoid getting into trouble.
JIM GUIAO-PUNZALAN

PINOY OVERSEAS GUIDE

Never insult the king and other tips

By Kate Pedroso and Kenneth M. del Rosario

ASIDE FROM WORK-RELATED STRESS BROUGHT about by working in foreign land miles away from family and loved ones, overseas Filipino workers also have to face culture shock head-on as soon as they step on a foreign soil.

Surviving in a different place with unfamiliar culture may not be the top concern for the OFWs, whose main purpose is to send money to their family and kin left behind. However, getting by even for a first-timer need not be too difficult, with pre-departure orientation seminars and pamphlets designed specifically for them.

To make adjustment abroad easier for the OFWs, Western Union has launched a pamphlet series, "Pinoy Care Handbook for the Overseas Filipino Worker," with focus on countries such as Italy, Hongkong, the United Kingdom and Ireland, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Japan.

Steve Peregrino, Marketing Manager of Western Union, says these countries are a top priority because there are many OFWs there. Around 100,000 copies of these pamphlets have been printed since 2001, when the money-transfer company first got involved with the government's pre-departure orientation seminars. Peregrino adds that these booklets are updated and reprinted at least once a year to keep up with changing information.

The handbooks feature basic country information, which include an overview of how to move around the country using local modes of transport, as well as the tourist spots. The pamphlets also include tips on how to relate with the local people of each country, as well as advice on conduct in public places.

The pamphlets tackle the usual OFW contract and its contents: The prescribed length of service, delineation of duties and responsibilities, living arrangements (including who to share a room with), monthly salary and food allowance, rest day and holidays (depending on the country's labor code) and paid annual leaves.

Information on health benefits, social security, and taxation are also discussed in the handbooks.

Moving around

Filipinos used to jeepneys and tricycles as common modes of transportation are in for a ride when traveling in countries like Hong Kong and Italy, where waterways are very much active thoroughfares. In Hong Kong, the ferry is the cheapest way to travel between Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and the islands of Lamma, Lantau, Cheung Chau and Peng Chau, while travel in Venice involves water buses and water taxis. Ferries are also available in Japan's Kansai Airport in Tokyo.

Familiar modes of transportation like buses and taxis are also available in countries such as UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Japan. In fact, the booklet notes that taxis are the only mode of transportation in UAE. Most taxis in Saudi Arabia and the UAE, however, are not metered. Therefore, passengers and taxi drivers need to agree upon a fare before riding the vehicle.

On the other hand, subways and trains are also popular for getting to places faster—the "Tube" is the fastest way to get to and around Central London, while the Mass Transit Railway system is also a primary means of quick transportation in Hong Kong. Subways and trains, or what they call "shinkansen," are also available for moving around in major cities in Japan.

Driving around in a car is also an option for traveling in the UK and Ireland. The pamphlets, however, note that cars in these countries are left-handed and that roads in Italy are "complicated and require concentration."

Getting along with the locals

Top advice for OFWs headed for the UK and Ireland: while the English like cracking jokes, they are quite sensitive when the joke is on them. The handbooks further warn OFWs to minimize, or altogether, avoid jokes about their royalty, politics, and religion, as these are insolent topics for the English.

On the other hand, the pamphlet for Italy-bound OFWs describes the standard Italian business greeting: a handshake and a business card. The pamphlet also advises OFWs to wait for the Italians to address you in a first name basis, before calling them by their given first names.

In Japan, respect is shown to one's employer by giving a "bow," which is the most popular way of greeting there. Another sign of respect when talking to Japanese is the addition of "-san" to one's last name such as "Hamada-san."

Also, avoid giving sharp objects or any "four" things as gifts to Japanese, as these spell bad luck or death to them. Be attentive as there are also offices and houses where shoes or sandals need to be removed before one can enter the premises.

The handbooks for Saudi Arabia and the UAE also reiterate some activities that are prohibited and may lead to imprisonment, deportation, lashing, or even death. These activities include consumption of alcohol and drugs, taking pictures of women and the military, homosexual activity and pornography, derogatory remarks on Islam or the Royal Family, public worship of other religion, man and woman living together without any relationship, and movies and music in public, among others.

The women in these Middle East countries are also expected to dress conservatively with long sleeves and long skirts. It is best, notes the booklets, to wear a headscarf and an "Abaya," a black cloth that covers the whole body.

Dress codes in Italy, UK and Ireland, on the other hand, are relatively informal. However, business suits are recommended when attending business meetings and formal parties in Italy. In the UK and Ireland, the pamphlet warns, one can actually be arrested for indecent behavior so one needs to "dress properly when going out."

How to get along with employers

The pamphlet on Hong Kong, absent with guidelines on how to interact with other Hong Kong civilians other than the employer himself or herself, seems to be directed for domestic workers bound for the country. It discusses at length reminders on how to get along with Hong Kong employers: diligence in working for long hours fast and efficiently, and properly asking permission if leaving workstation or if planning on entertaining guests.

Aside from these country-specific socialization tips, the pamphlets also include general behavior guidelines that apply wherever. Topping this set of tips: "Make it a point to be punctual. Ditch 'Filipino Time'." Cleanliness whenever, wherever—may it be in the workplace or outside, in the city—is also stressed.

DOT hopes 'they shall return'

By Linda B. Bolido

EXPLORE, EXPERIENCE, RETURN: The logo is an invitation for the overseas Filipinos to come home.

THE DEPARTMENT of Tourism (DOT) is asking Filipinos in North America not just to call home like ET tried to do, but to come home.

And they are providing some rather hard-to-resist enticements to lure them back like free plane tickets, discounted hotel accommodations, a *balikbayan* boxful of prizes and a fully furnished condominium unit to be given away monthly and in a grand annual raffle draws.

The campaign, "The Philippines: Explore. Experience. Return," will be formally launched during the annual Fiesta Filipina celebrations today at the Civic Center Plaza in San Francisco, California. The celebrations usher in the observance of Independence Day tomorrow.

Though the campaign will also be directed at North Americans, Canadians and US citizens, special focus will be given to the millions of Filipinos residing in those two countries, particularly younger generations who have only vague or no memories whatsoever of the Philippines.

Long-term investments

Tourism Secretary Joseph Ace Durano pointed out during a media briefing at the Makati Shangri-La, where he also introduced the campaign's major partners, residents of those two countries who were of Filipino descent represented not just sources of traditional tourism revenues but might also be tapped for long-term investments like real estate.

Durano said DOT's campaigns last year focused on three major Asian markets—Japan, China and Korea. Now that a fairly satisfactory number of tourist arrivals was being registered from those three countries, the department decided "to look for sources that would fill the gap during the second and third quarters of the year," lean seasons for the local travel industry. This will maximize use of facilities particularly in the light of recent expansions.

It is estimated that Canada and the US now host 3.3 million people of Filipino descent. Last year, Durano said only less than 600,000 arrivals belonging to this group were registered, a small percentage of the total.

Alternative vacation spots

The multi-pronged campaign aims to encourage North American passport holders to consider the Philippines as an alternative vacation spot—explore and experience it and really get to know the place. Durano said the "balikbayan" box would, in fact, contain items representative of a country very much into the 21st century "to change the perception that we are still backward."

Of course, getting Filipinos to return to their native land—and non-Filipinos to revisit as often as possible—is an equally important goal.

During the San Francisco celebrations, 50 free round-trip plane tickets courtesy of Philippine Airlines will be raffled off during the Wowowee segment of the event.

An online raffle promo will give away 250 more free seats via PAL. Those interested can simply log on to www.experiencephilippines.ph for a chance to win one of those seats.

The second phase of the campaign called "Out-of-the-box" offers literally a mixed bag—rather box—of goodies from such sponsors as Abenson, American Eye Center, Avis, Globe Telecom, Kuok Group and Philippine National Bank, including discounted hotel accommodations and a fully furnished condominium unit.

Indonesians set to overtake Pinays in Hong Kong

By Isabel T. Escoda

EACH YEAR HONG KONG'S major newspaper, the South China Morning Post, runs a survey of the number of foreigners in the territory. For over two decades the list has been topped by Filipinos, followed by Americans, Britons, Australians, Europeans, Indians, Thais, Sri Lankans and Nepalis. Invariably the report states that the large Philippine community is composed mainly of female domestics, as are those from Thailand, Sri Lanka, Nepal and India.

Oddly, Americans outnumber Britons in this former British colony. Even though a number of retired colonial officials and businessmen have chosen to retire in what is known today as China's "Special Administrative Region" (SAR), the American presence is larger, reflecting their business connections and investments. As a gateway to China, Hong Kong naturally attracts Western companies seeking to tap into the mainland's booming economy.

Westerners in Hong Kong are usually referred to as "expatriates," while Filipino maids are called "migrant workers." A feature writer once jokingly suggested that all Westerners instead be dubbed the migrant workers, and the domestics, the expats.

Expats and OFWs

Interestingly, even though the Pinays still lead the yearly list of foreign residents, Indonesian women are fast catching up, having swarmed into the territory in great numbers. As of April 30 this year, the total number of Filipinos (which includes a few hundred males working as drivers and musicians) was pegged at 119,672, while Indonesian women (who a few years ago were only a couple of thousands) reached 99,155 this year.

The number of Pinay domestics peaked in the late 1990s and early 2000 because of their reputation as capable workers, and—most importantly—as English speakers. However, after the Asian economic meltdown and the SARS scare, the numbers tumbled. Not long after the economy began picking up again, Indonesian women began arriving. It was obvious that their country's economy was in as much trouble as the Philippines', also that the Indonesian government saw how the OFW's remittances have been propping up the Philippine economy. So they too began the business of exporting their women—something ironic for an Islamic country, given that Muslim women have traditionally been protected and not given much independence. Desperate economic times apparently call for desperate measures, hence the growing numbers of their women exported to places like Malaysia, Singapore and Hong Kong.

Sadly, this commodification of women from developing countries has become such big business, few people look askance at the social costs to the exporting nations' societies. Much of this, according to a recent US state department report, has resulted in human trafficking on such a scale that the practice today is the third largest international trade, next to that of drugs and weapons. The 290-page report, titled "Trafficking in Persons," which outlines in grim detail thousands of cases of women and children kept in virtual slavery, is dedicated to a young Indonesian named Nour Miyati. Nour worked as a maid for four years in the Middle East for an employer who kept her confined, withheld her wages and tortured her so severely, she lost fingers and feet that had developed gangrene.

Suicides and abuses

Cases of abuse of Filipinas in Hong Kong have, over the years, been sporadic—unlike in Singapore where an irate employer once burned her Indonesian maid with an iron, and about a thousand Indonesians fell out of high-rise buildings last year, reportedly suicides. In Hong Kong today, thanks to NGOs and other agencies that look after the migrant workers' welfare, extreme abuse is rare. But too many Pinays still put up with their employers' unfair treatment because the alternative at home is penury, a state of affairs that began when Marcos started to impoverish this country.

When the export of Pinays started in the 1970s, no training was given to the women who today still pay exorbitant fees to recruitment agencies. Many then were ill prepared to face alien cultures in places like Hong Kong, Japan and Saudi Arabia, the major receiving nations. But after growing reports of employer abuse and occasional suicides, the Philippine government belatedly initiated some token domestic training.

The Indonesian government, by contrast, after having recruiters troll for young women in *kampongs* (barrios), place the women in training centers where they pay a fee in exchange for jobs abroad. They are confined for anywhere from three to six months in these centers which, according to Indonesian activist Eni Lestari, are like boot camps. The girls are drilled in Cantonese and the basic domestic skills, and also taught how to make remittances. Today there's a big demand for Indonesian servants in places like Singapore, Malaysia and Hong Kong. Sadly many of them end up in extreme servitude because they have not been informed of their rights and have no protection once they're abroad. Ms Lestari says it's pointless seeking help from the Indonesian Consulate in Hong Kong because the officials themselves actively promote the hiring of their nationals and brook no complaints of abuse from the women. They also turn a blind eye when Hong Kong employers pay the Indonesians less than the minimum wage and don't give them the required weekly day off. This is a major reason employers now prefer to hire Indonesians who are easier to browbeat than Pinays.

Exporting women

Malaysia also prefers the Indonesians because of their common Bahasa language, and there have been cases of employers keeping the women in virtual bondage because they're meeker than the more savvy Pinays. A Malaysian housewife once told me, "I wouldn't hire a Filipina because they're too smart for their own good."

So the vicious cycle continues. While poverty remains rampant in many Asian countries, women will be exported to generate revenue for their governments. And so long as recruiters and employers look on them as commodities, all too often they will be subjected to vile treatment. As US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice declared recently, "The harsh reality of human trafficking stuns even the hardest of hearts."

Family loses 6 members in Israeli Gaza shelling

BEIT LAHIYA, GAZA STRIP—ON A WARM summer day, Palestinian farmer Ali Ghalia headed to the beach, looking for a little enjoyment with his family.

In a split second, six family members were gone, struck by an errant Israeli shell. It was the second time in less than two years that family members had been killed in an Israeli attack.

Ali Ghalia had taken his two wives and nine children on the trip, and the family was enjoying a picnic when the Israeli artillery shell hit them.

"This was his first day at the beach this summer. He was taking his kids to play," said the man's sister-in-law, Nasreen Ghalia.

Ali Ghalia, 45, was killed. One of his two wives and three children were among the dead.

One of the survivors was a 7-year-old girl, Hadeel, who remained hospitalized with shrapnel in her neck and unaware that she had lost her parents and siblings. Three half-brothers and sisters and her stepmother lay in other hospitals, some in serious condition.

"Hadeel is now an orphan," Nasreen, who was not at the family picnic, said in an interview at the Gaza hospital where the girl was being treated. The family ordered visitors not to break the news to the girl.

Israel frequently targets open areas in the northern Gaza Strip used by Palestinian militants to launch homemade rockets toward Israel. Repeated Israeli airstrikes and artillery fire have done little to halt the crude rockets, which land in Israel almost every day. The rockets are highly inaccurate but have been fatal.

While Israel has urged civilians to stay away from the launching areas, there have been other civilian casualties recently. In early April, an 8-year-old girl was killed by tank shells hit her house, and last month, three family members, including a 6-year-old boy, were killed in an Israeli airstrike aimed as they drove in a car. The missile had been aimed at a militant traveling in a nearby vehicle.

Israel's military chief, Lt. Gen. Dan Halutz, ordered a halt to artillery attacks while an investigation was launched into Friday's incident.

"I express deep regret over the fact that uninvolved persons have been hit," Maj. Gen. Yoav Galant, Israel's southern commander, told reporters. "We shall try to find a way to ensure not to harm the uninvolved."

More than 30 beachgoers were wounded Friday, the weekend in Gaza.

Kamal Ghobn, a 41 year old, who had just arrived with his extended family to the beach in the afternoon, said he saw four shells, two of them landed close to him. He suffered shrapnel wounds to his waist. The rest of his family escaped uninjured.

The barrage scattered body parts along the beach, destroyed a tent and sent bloody beach blankets into the air. A panicked crowd quickly gathered, screaming and running around in confusion.

One young girl screamed hysterically and threw herself on the sand. "Father! Father!" she screamed, gesturing toward the motionless body of a man lying nearby. *AP*

IMAGE grab taken from a TV footage shows a Palestinian girl as she weeps next to the body of her father killed in Israeli shelling on a beach in the northern Gaza Strip, June 9. Seven Palestinians, including two children, were killed in the Israeli shelling of the northern Gaza Strip's seafront. The deaths raised the death toll from Israeli strikes to 14 in less than 24 hours. AFP

Hamas ends ceasefire with rockets

GAZA—HAMAS LAUNCHED rockets at Israel on Saturday, formally ending a 16-month-old truce, after blaming Israeli artillery fire for the killing of seven Palestinians relaxing on a Gaza beach.

Amid the bloodshed, officials said President Mahmoud Abbas was weighing whether to go ahead with a planned announcement later in the day to order a referendum on a statehood proposal, opposed by Hamas, that implicitly recognizes Israel.

The manifesto penned by Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails is at the heart of Abbas's power struggle with Hamas, an Islamic militant group dedicated to Israel's destruction that came to power after a January election.

An Israeli army spokesperson said six rockets were fired from Gaza overnight but it was still unclear whether any had landed inside Israeli territory.

"This is only the start and rocket firings will continue," said a spokesperson for Hamas's Izz el-Deen al-Qassam Brigades, a group that carried out nearly 60 suicide bombings in Israel since the start of a Palestinian uprising in 2000. *Reuters*

Blind poet designs 'seeing machine'

CAMBRIDGE, MASS.—A LEGALLY blind poet at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology has designed a "seeing machine" that allows people with limited vision to see faces of friends, read or study the layouts of buildings they intend to visit.

The device, which MIT estimates costs about $4,000 to manufacture, plugs into a personal computer and uses light-emitting diodes to project selected images into a person's eye, allowing visually impaired users to see words or pictures.

"The advantage of this kind of display is there's no extraneous stuff in your peripheral vision that gets in the way," Elizabeth Goldring, who has published three volumes of poetry, said in an interview. "The image gets projected right onto the retina."

The device, which Goldring calls a "seeing machine," is housed in a box that measures about 30 cm (12 inches) by 15 cm (6 inches) by 15 cm.

The seeing machine is not wearable and would not allow one to easily navigate through a crowded, unfamiliar space. But it helps a user study a color image, such as printed words, pictures of people or room layouts. It only works for people with some living retina cells and a completely blind person would not be able to use the device.

It was tested on 10 people with limited vision—the majority of whom were legally blind, meaning they can see nothing smaller than the large "E" on an eye chart. The majority could see the images and recognize simple words. *Reuters*

Suu Kyi hospitalized

RANGOON, BURMA—BURMA'S democracy icon Aung San Suu Kyi was briefly hospitalized this week but was on Saturday resting at home where she remains under house arrest, a party spokesperson said.

Reports of her illness had earlier prompted the US State Department to say it was "very concerned" and call on the country's military rulers to ensure she received prompt treatment.

"I understand that she went for treatment to hospital on Friday, but she is now back at her home," said Nyan Win, a spokesperson for the National League for Democracy, adding that the opposition leader was treated for acute diarrhea.

Burma's police chief, Major General Khin Yi, said she had been treated by her personal doctor on Thursday and that said she was currently resting at home.

"She is at her house now. She was suffering from diarrhea," he told reporters while travelling in eastern Karen state.

Her doctor, Tin Myo Win, could not be reached for comment, but the NLD spokesperson said that he might be caring for her inside the lakeside home where she is confined under house arrest.

"It is possible that Doctor Tin Myo Win and his wife are with her at this moment looking after her," he said.

US state department spokesperson Sean McCormack on Friday expressed concern at reports of her illness, while at the time saying he was unable to confirm the information, which apparently came from exiles originally from Burma—also known as Myanmar.

"We would call upon the Burmese government to provide

AUNG San Suu Kyi REUTERS

Aung San Suu Kyi any and all medical assistance that she might need and to do so expeditiously and to ensure her safety during any treatment," he told reporters.

Defying international demands for her freedom, Burma's military rulers in late May extended Aung San Suu Kyi's house arrest for another year. *AFP*

US teen who tried to see man from Jericho returns

DETROIT—A 16-YEAR-OLD honor student from Michigan tricked her parents into getting her a passport and then flew off to the Mideast to be with a West Bank man she met on MySpace.com, authorities say.

US officials in Jordan persuaded her to turn around and go home before she reached the West Bank. She returned home Friday.

Katherine R. Lester is a straight-A student and student council member, her father said. "She's a good girl. Never had a problem with her," Terry Lester said.

MySpace.com is a social networking website with more than 72 million members that lets users post photos, blogs and journals. There have been scattered accounts of sexual predators targeting minors they met through the site.

Katherine disappeared Monday after talking her family into getting her a passport by saying she was going to Canada with friends, sheriff's officials said. She apparently planned to visit a man whose MySpace account describes him as a 25-year-old from Jericho, Undersheriff James Jashinske said.

The FBI traced the teenager to a Wednesday flight from New York's Kennedy Airport to Tel Aviv, Israel. At a scheduled stop in Amman, Jordan, US officials persuaded her to return home, FBI agent Robert Beeckman said.

Television news footage showed Katherine waving as she walked across a tarmac at Bishop International Airport in Flint late Friday. She was taken to a private area to be reunited with her family.

LESTER AP

Katherine apparently contacted the man from Jericho about three months ago, Jashinske said. Jericho, a city of 17,000, is a relatively calm area of the volatile West Bank.

MySpace forbids youngsters 13 and under from joining and provides special protections for those 14 and 15—only people on their list of friends can view their profiles. Older users also have the option of restricting certain personal data so it can be seen only by people they have identified as friends.

Shawn Lester told The Saginaw News that her daughter has "never given me a day's trouble ... I just don't understand with all these new laws protecting America how a 16-year-old kid could get out of the country." She said her daughter never had a boyfriend and seemed to be content with that.

The age of consent in Michigan is 16; Katherine turns 17 on June 21. *AP*

IT'S HOT! WHO CARES WHAT CITY HALL THINKS!
People cool off by running through fountains in the city center of Manchester, northern England June 9. REUTERS

NY mayor's takeover of school system praised, assailed

By Nahal Toosi

NEW YORK—FOUR YEARS AFTER taking control of New York's struggling school system, Mayor Michael Bloomberg has earned praise from many education observers across the country. The mayor of Los Angeles is using New York as a model for his push to take over that city's school system.

But in Bloomberg's own city, the reviews are far less flattering. Critics complain about a lack of checks and balances and some former supporters of mayoral control hope to strip away some power when the Legislature considers reauthorizing the arrangement in 2009.

"What has happened ... is that if you agree with the mayor it's fantastic. But all those parents who disagree with the mayor, they get left out in the cold, and the same in respect to teachers," said teachers union president Randi Weingarten, who backed the idea when it was signed into law in June 2002.

Bloomberg has rebuffed the notion of changing the system.

"I think that if you want to destroy the progress, that's as good a prescription as any," he said earlier this year. "Accountability has to be accountability, end of story."

The New York school system was centralized in 2002 after Bloomberg convinced state lawmakers he could run the 1.1 million-student system, the nation's largest, more efficiently.

Bloomberg and his chancellor, former federal prosecutor Joel Klein, introduced uniform reading and math curricula in most of the system's 1,400-plus schools. They embraced charter schools and started more than 150 small secondary schools.

When Bloomberg faced opposition, he got rid of it. In 2004, the mayor fired two of his appointees to the Panel for Educational Policy and engineered the removal of a third member to get the group to approve one of his biggest reforms: holding back third-graders who score poorly on standardized tests.

More recently, parent groups have clashed with the mayor over a longtime ban on student cell phones in schools. Bloomberg has refused to lift the ban despite rallies, petitions and parents' vows to take the issue to court.

Teachers say they need more flexibility than what the uniform curriculum offers. Early in the takeover, teachers found their bulletin boards and classroom decorations monitored—micromanagement run amok, they said.

"People are not able to teach in an individual manner—everything is in a prescribed manner," said Ron Isaac, an English teacher in the city's Queens borough and vocal union member. "There is a climate of intimidation."

Bloomberg and Klein point to improved fourth-grade test scores and high demand for charter and small schools as evidence of success. Critics counter with a stagnant graduation rate (54 percent is the rosiest estimate) and poor eighth-grade test results.

Earlier this year, Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa visited New York schools and praised Bloomberg's management. Los Angeles' sprawling school system, the nation's second largest, struggles with low test scores and high drop out rates.

Villaraigosa says mayoral control would reduce bureaucracy and increase efficiency. His plan, which faces opposition from teachers unions and members of the Board of Education, must be approved by state lawmakers.

School leaders in Massachusetts and Connecticut are also interested in New York's version of mayoral control, Klein said.

Few, if any, of Bloomberg's critics are enamored by the prospect of a return to the previous decentralization. Yet even some state legislators say they'd consider modifications. Bloomberg, who made billions in the business world, has approached the schools as a chief executive, state Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver said.

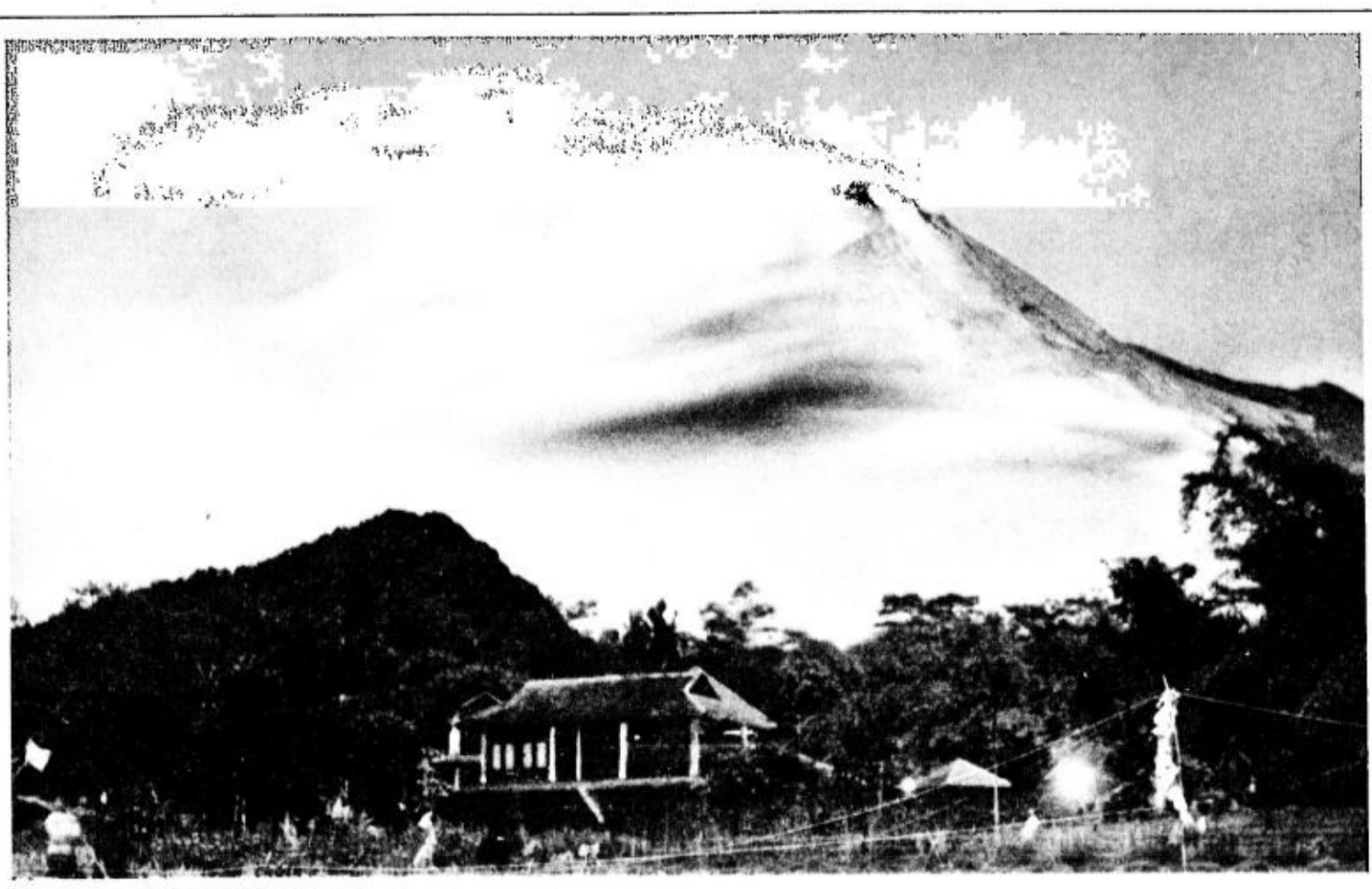
"Even in corporate America there is an annual shareholders meeting and the stockholders do vote, and the parents to some extent are the stockholders," Silver said.

A request to Bloomberg's press office for an interview was referred to Deputy Mayor Dennis Walcott, who defended the system.

"I think the pluses ... of mayoral control have been significant. I would totally disagree with those who say that we need to go back to a system of even modified dysfunctionality," he said. *AP*

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco



HOT AND FURIOUS
Indonesia's Mount Merapi's lava dome has swelled, which may suddenly collapse and send scalding clouds of gas and rocks into towns. AP

Aussie peacekeepers ready to disarm rebs

DILI—AN AUSTRALIAN-LED multinational peacekeeping force is prepared to disarm and contain rebel soldiers in East Timor if asked to do so by the authorities, its commander said Saturday.

Asked if the peacekeepers were prepared to step in, disarm rebel soldiers and contain them to prevent violence from escalating further, Brigadier Michael Slater said: "We have the military capacity to do that when the time is right."

East Timor President Xanana Gusmao is working to keep the security situation stable and "bring people (together) for reconciliation," Slater told reporters.

But he said the Joint Task Force of peacekeepers from four nations would not act unilaterally and will allow Gusmao to sort things out with rebel soldiers still holed up in mountain areas outside Dili.

"What I can't afford to do is act preemptively and disrupt negotiating going on. It is a very fine balance and people are walking that very fine line at the moment," Slater stressed.

"If anyone acts independently ... but does something that doesn't seem acceptable to all parties, then we run the risk of creating more turmoil than what we have already seen," he said.

East Timor, Asia's youngest nation, was plunged into civil unrest after Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri fired 600 soldiers in March.

The group, nearly half the entire military force of the country, had complained of being discriminated against because of their origins in the west of the country.

The sacking plunged East Timor into chaos. Twenty-one people died last month as sporadic battles between rival soldiers, and soldiers and police, descended into gang clashes and led the government to appeal for foreign help.

More than 2,000 foreign soldiers and police are now deployed in Dili but scattered arson, looting and gunplay continues. *AFP*

Al-Zarqawi survived bomb attack

Terrorist tried to escape and later died of his wounds, US says

BAGHDAD, IRAQ—ABU MUSAB AL-ZARQAWI could barely speak, but he struggled and tried to get away from American soldiers as he lay dying on a stretcher in the ruins of his hideout.

The US forces recognized his face, and knew they had the leader of al-Qaida in Iraq.

Initially, the US military had said al-Zarqawi was killed outright. But Friday new details emerged of his final moments.

For three years, al-Zarqawi orchestrated horrific acts of violence guided by his extremist vision of jihad, or holy war—first against the US soldiers he considered occupiers of Arab lands, then against the Shiites he considered infidels.

On Wednesday, the US military tracked him to a house northwest of Baghdad, and blew it up with two 500-pound (225-kilogram) bombs.

Al-Zarqawi somehow managed to survive the impact of the bombs, weapons so powerful they tore a huge crater in the date palm forest where the house was nestled just outside the town of Baqouba.

Iraqi police reached the scene first, and found the 39-year-old al-Zarqawi alive.

"He mumbled something, but it was indistinguishable and it was very short," Maj. Gen. William Caldwell, spokesperson for US-led forces in Iraq, said Friday of the Jordanian-born terrorist's last words.

Iraqi police pulled him from the flattened home and placed him on a makeshift stretcher. US troops arrived, saw that al-Zarqawi was conscious, and tried to provide medical treatment, the spokesperson said.

"He obviously had some kind of visual recognition of who they were because he attempted to roll off the stretcher, as I am told, and get away, realizing it was the US military," Caldwell told Pentagon reporters via videoconference from Baghdad.

Al-Zarqawi "attempted to, sort of, turn away off the stretcher," he said. "Everybody re-secured him back onto the stretcher, but he died almost immediately thereafter from the wounds he'd received from this airstrike."

So much blood covered al-Zarqawi's body that US forces cleaned him up before taking photographs. "Despite the fact that this person actually had no regard for human life, we were not going to treat him in the same manner," Caldwell said.

The airstrike killed two other men and three women who were in the house, but only al-Zarqawi and his spiritual adviser have been positively identified, he said. *AP*

AL-ZAWAHIRI in a video grab. AFP

Al-Qaida No. 2 lauds al-Zarqawi

CAIRO, Egypt—AL-QAIDA'S NO. 2 praised Abu Musab al-Zarqawi in a videotape broadcast on an Arab satellite network, but did not mention his death in a US airstrike, suggesting the tape was made earlier.

Ayman al-Zawahri focused on political developments in the Palestinian territories, Sudan and Egypt in the tape broadcast Friday by the Al-Jazeera network.The video is the sixth al-Zawahri has issued this year.

An Al-Jazeera anchorman said the tape was made before al-Zarqawi's death was announced Thursday because al-Zawahri praised the al-Qaida in Iraq leader's efforts to confront US-led forces in Iraq.

"God bless the prophet of Islam in Iraq, the persistent hero of Islam, the Holy Warrior Abu Musab al-Zarqawi," al-Zawahri said.

He also sent greetings to the Shura Council of Mujahedeen in Iraq and insurgents, "who are confronting crusaders and their apostate aides and the merchants of religion."

The network did not say how it obtained the recording. It broadcast about six minutes of the approximately 17 minute-long recording, an editor there told The Associated Press.

The authenticity of the tape could not immediately be confirmed independently.

In Washington, US State Department spokesperson Sean McCormack said: "I know the intelligence community has done an assessment of the tape and confirmed it is Zawahri's voice."

A US counterterrorism official, who spoke on condition of anonymity while events were unfolding, said government experts were doing a technical analysis of the video, but there was no reason to doubt its authenticity. *AP*

N. Zealand deports man linked to 9/11 terror attacker

WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND—A man who had close links to one of the Sept. 11, 2001, hijackers was deported from New Zealand last month after officials discovered his true identity and learned he had been taking pilot lessons in the country, the government said Saturday.

Rayed Mohammed Abdullah Ali, a Yemeni, was deported to Saudi Arabia on May 30 because his presence in New Zealand posed a security threat, Immigration Minister David Cunliffe said.

He declined to give details, but said authorities did not have any evidence of any specific plans for a terrorist attack.

The US congressional investigation into the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks in the United States said Rayed Abdullah was a friend of Saudi Arabian Hani Hanjour, one of the terrorists aboard American Airlines flight 77 that was flown into the Pentagon, and attended a flight school in Arizona, where Hanjour also received training.

"He was directly associated with persons responsible for the terrorist attacks in the United States on Sept. 11, 2001," Cunliffe said in a statement.

Rayed Abdullah was deported one day after he was arrested in Palmerston North on New Zealand's North Island, where he was taking pilot training lessons.

"He was building up his flying hours flying with an instructor. He'd previously trained as a pilot in the United States," Cunliffe said. *AP*

REALLY FIRST CLASS
A stamp bearing the photograph and signature of actress Judy Garland, whose famous role was Dorothy in "The Wizard of Oz," as released by the United States Postal Service. In honor of what would have been the star's 84th birthday, the commemorative 39-cent first class stamp will be available in New York only on June 10, and will be released nationwide on June 12. AP

Scaredy-cat bear treed

WEST MILFORD, NEW JERSEY—A black bear picked the wrong yard for a jaunt, running into a territorial tabby who ran the furry beast up a tree—twice.

Jack, a 15-pound (7-kilogram) orange and white cat, keeps a close vigil on his property, often chasing small animals, but his owners and neighbors say his latest escapade was surprising.

"We used to joke, Jack's on duty,' never knowing he'd go after a bear," owner Donna Dickey told The Star-Ledger of Newark.

Neighbor Suzanne Giovanetti first spotted Jack's accomplishment after her husband saw a bear climb a tree on the edge of their northern New Jersey property on Sunday. Giovanetti thought Jack was simply looking up at the bear, but soon realized the much larger animal was afraid of the hissing cat.

After about 15 minutes, the bear descended and tried to run away, but Jack chased it up another tree.

Dickey, who feared for her cat, then called Jack home and the bear scurried back to the woods.

"He doesn't want anybody in his yard," Dickey said.

Bear sightings are not unusual in West Milford, which experts consider one of the state's most bear-populated areas. *AP*

JACK, a 15-pound orange-and-white cat, (close-up photo at left) testily watches a treed black bear terrified of the cat in a backyard in West Milford, N.J., June 4. AP

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Sunday SPORTS

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WHAT'S INSIDE

■ **Germans rap Costa Rica XI**

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■ **Federer, Nadal dispute French Open crown** /A28

Harbour Centre rips Toyota, levels series

GAME TUESDAY (*Olivarez Sports Center*)
3 p.m.—Toyota Otis vs Harbour Centre (Game 3-Finals)

By Jasmine W. Payo

IT WAS THE SAME SCENARIO BUT ROLES WERE reversed this time.

The Harbour Centre Portmasters, starring their streak-shooting backcourt trio, overwhelmed the Toyota Otis Sparks, 78-63, to level the best-of-five PBL Unity Cup title series at 1-1 yesterday at the Olivarez Sports Center in Parañaque.

The Portmasters snatched control quite early, with Joseph Yeo firing 17 of his 25 points in the first half. LA Tenorio then took over, pouring in 12 of his 16 markers in the last two quarters with backup guard Chico Lanete drilling in 11 of his 14 points in the final period.

"Joseph and LA stepped up, the guys that didn't play well in the first game," said Harbour Centre coach Jorge Gallent. "Our defense played out well. Our big men, our backcourt, everyone played well."

The Portmasters recovered from their horrendous 26 percent shooting in Game 1 which the Sparks won, 68-51.

This time, he Sparks could hit only 29 percent of their shots.

Toyota Otis, though, still kept fighting after the break. Trailing 24-32 at halftime, the Sparks opened the third period with a 6-0 run to cut the lead by two, 32-30.

But Rob Reyes, who scored all of his eight points in the third quarter, powered the Portmasters out front anew, 47-39.

Tenorio continued the Portmasters' scoring tear with an undergoal stab, followed by a three-pointer. The star point guard then capped his solo show with a running jumper for 54-42 at the end of third period.

Then it was Lanete's turn to get hot, burying two triples in the opening minutes to stretch the lead to 60-46.

But the Sparks quickly trimmed the lead to 60-54 behind an 8-0 burst that included two triples by Boyet Bautista.

The Sparks thought they found a late-game hero, but, unfortunately, Bautista fouled out with 6:44 minutes left.

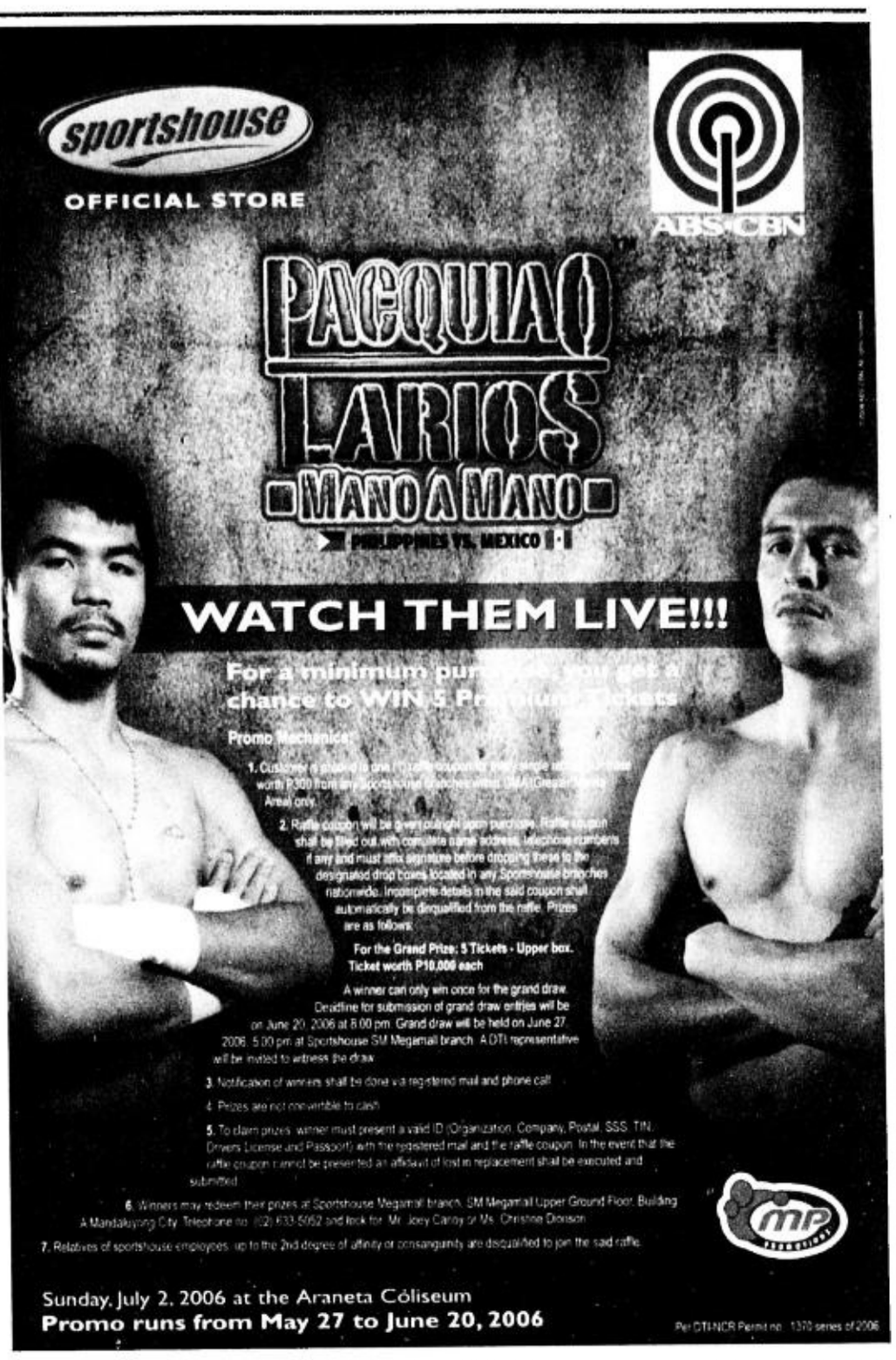
Visibly shaken, the Sparks wilted as the Portmasters stormed beyond reach at 73-58 with 2:30 remaining.

The scores:

HARBOUR CENTRE 78—Yeo 25, Tenorio 16, Lanete 14, Reyes 8, Maierhofer 4, Gaco 4, Coching 3, Chia 3, Dy 1, Arana 0, Alonzo 0, Gamboa 0.

TOYOTA OTIS 63—Aban 17, Bautista 15, Coronel 8, Andaya 7, Aldave 6, Devance 6, Alcaraz 2, Daa 2, Fajardo 0, Rodriguez 0, Oreta 0, Casio 0.

Quarters: 12-10, 32-24, 54-42, 78-63



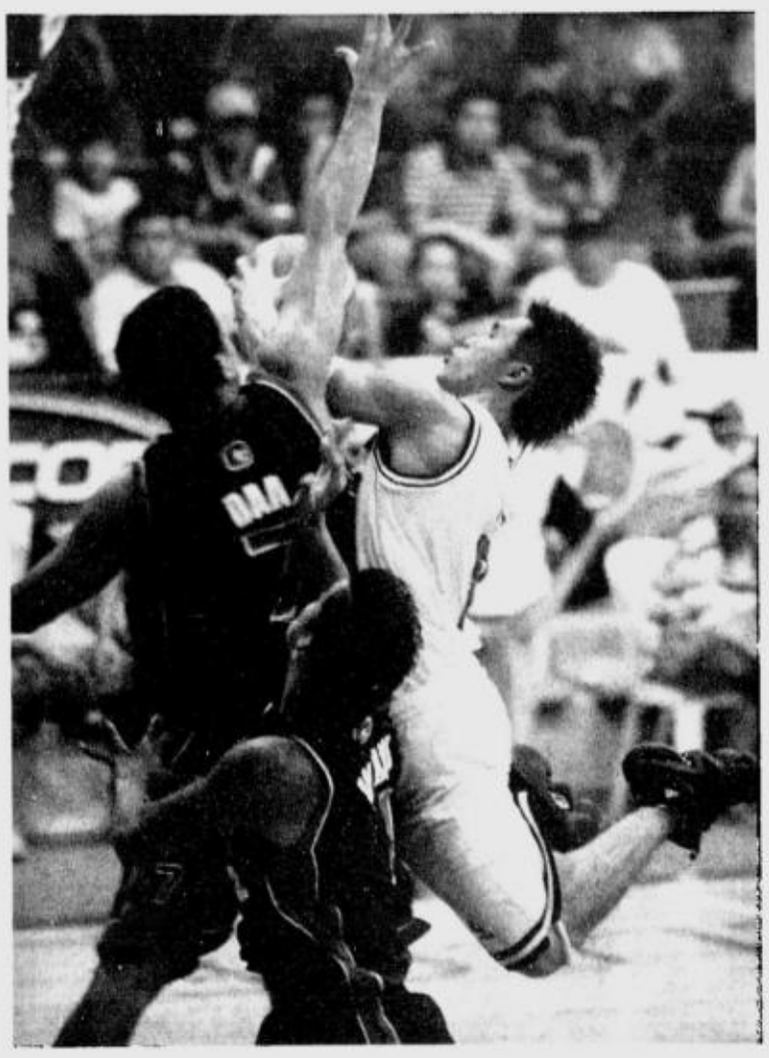
Belmont Stakes up

NEW YORK—THE Kentucky Derby winner is recovering from a life-threatening injury at a hospital in Pennsylvania, and the Preakness winner will remain in his barn for Saturday's 138th Belmont Stakes.

Without Barbaro and Bernardini, the final leg of the Triple Crown will be anything but a "Test of the Champion."

"It's the test of the leftovers," trainer Bob Baffert joked Friday morning, "I mean champions."

For the first time in years, there's little to get excited about heading into the 1½-mile (2.4 kilometer) Belmont. "Clearly it is not as exciting when there isn't a Triple Crown prospect, but that doesn't mean I want to win the Belmont any less," trainer Todd Pletcher said. *AP*



JOSEPH Yeo (right) of Harbour Centre defies the defense put up by Dennis Daa and Mark Andaya of Toyota Otis in Game 2 of the PBL finals yesterday. *(Story on Page A25.)* ROMY HOMILLADA

Alaska seeks clincher; Kings, Bulls break tie

GAMES TODAY *(Araneta Coliseum)*
4:10 p.m.—Alaska vs Coca-Cola
6:30 p.m.—Red Bull vs Barangay Ginebra
Game 1—Alaska d. Coca-Cola, 95-94
Game 1—Red Bull d. Ginebra, 93-86
Game 2—Alaska d. Coca-Cola, 81-75
Game 2—Ginebra d. Red Bull, 112-103

AS FAR AS ALASKA IS CONCERNED, this series is far from over.

Though 2-0 up in their best-of-five series, coach Tim Cone believes that nothing short of continued hard work and a sprinkling of luck would give his Aces the chance to finish off Coca-Cola in Game 3 tonight of their PBA Philippine Cup quarterfinal duel at the Araneta Coliseum.

"It's (the series) definitely not over," said Cone after pushing the Tigers to the edge with a brilliant 81-75 Game 2 victory on Friday. "We need (to win) only one game. They have to beat us three straight, but it's not impossible."

Game time is 4:10 p.m. followed by the Red Bull-Barangay Ginebra clash at 6:30.

Alaska, the dynasty of the 1990s, is seeking to make the Final Four for the first time in six conferences and the Aces now have the tools to do so.

Mid-tournament trade acquisitions Willie Miller, John Ferriols and Nic Belasco have added depth to the Alaska rotation, while the seasoned Jeffrey Cariaso and Tony dela Cruz are playing inspired ball and have been consistent all tournament long.

"That's what you get from veteran guys and it rubs off on the younger players," said Cone, who has also gotten respectable numbers from bench players led by Willie Wilson and the young Sonny Thoss.

Mike Cortez has dominated the point guard spot in the series, winning his personal battle with 1996 MVP Johnny Abarrientos and the entire Coca-Cola rotation.

Though down and their entire season on the line, the Tigers are not being written off by anyone as breaks played a major part in their two defeats. They blew a 20-point lead in Game 1 and flubbed control early in the fourth quarter of the second game.

"We played low-scoring games but it suits both of us," said Cone. "We're both defense-oriented."

The Bulls will try to bounce back from the 112-103 beating they got in Game 2 even with the Kings so depleted and all.

"We face adversities by playing our hearts out," said Ginebra coach Siot Tanquingcen after leveling the series on Friday. "The key is to have faith in each other."

Rookie Mark Macapagal, a walk-in during the Ginebra tryouts prior to the conference, has so far been a revelation for the Kings.

He was instrumental in making sure that the Kings got this far and he was again a major factor why Ginebra won a game not a few thought was highly remote, considering the odds.

Macapagal, the former San Sebastian hotshot in the NCAA, hit 16 of his 21 points in the breakaway third quarter that set the tone of the win.

Eric Menk scored 35 points and grabbed 16 rebounds, while Mark Caguioa had 31 points and 12 rebounds. *June Navarro*

M. Lhuillier eyes sweep of PacMan 5

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—M. LHUILLIER KWARta Padala-Cebu guns for a sweep of the ML Kwarta Padala Mindanao Visayas Basketball Association (MVBA) First Conference against PacMan-GenSan today at the General Santos City Gym here.

Mindanao division champion PacMan-GenSan of boxing superstar Manny Pacquiao tries to avert being shut out of the best-of-five series by winning the 6 p.m. contest.

Game 4, if necessary, will be played tomorrow, while a rubber match, if needed, will be at the Cebu Coliseum gym in Cebu.

The Jewelers won the first two games of the series in overwhelming fashion at home—101-91 in the opener last June 6 and 92-81the next day—despite the defense-oriented play of PacMan-GenSan.

The series is being supported by ML Kwarta Padala, Cokaliong Shipping Lines, Nature's Spring Drinking Water, Gameface.ph, Panasonic, Molten and Sulpicio Lines. Game One last June 6 ended at 101-91 while Game Two the next day saw a 92-81 tally.

Visayas Division MVP Jayford Rodriguez and veteran Mike Manigo, who are both averaging 22.5 points in the series, and guard Woodrow Enriquez (18.5 ppg), will be PacMan-GenSan's main concerns on the defensive end.

Meanwhile, PacMan coach Ramon Pido hopes to draw more consistent play from his reliable players led by Mindanao Division MVP Louie Medalla (12.0 ppg), swingmen Apol Coronado (13.5 ppg) and Jethro Recustodio (12.5) and big men Weng Farochillen (12.0 ppg) and Jaypee Locsin (13.0).

Race 1—(Tri)—Iron Chef (4), EJ Forever (2), Eye Of D' Beholder (3)
Race 2—(Ort/Tri)—Somos O No SOmos (3), Smooth Strike (2), Strong Boy (5), Besame Mucho (6)
Race 3—(Tri)—All Class/ Tiedil Forever (5), Fastteller (2), Pride Of Cebu (3)
Race 4—(Danehil Dave (9), Pabilic Express (8), Looney Tune (4), Iron Tower (5), Speed Of Lighting (3)
Race 5—(()Crystal City/Ruah (2), Glamour (3)
Race 6—(Ort/Tri)—Beautiful Jaeda/Morning Glory (3), Astronaut (2), Valentine Girl (7), Music Quest (5)
Race 7—(Ort/Tri)—Heroics/ Badge Of Honor (1), Slatks (2), Frosty Bally (8), Dream Cross/Tinder (5)
Race 8—(Penta/Ort/Tri)—Batang Bukid (4), Hale And Hearty (3), Shifty (2), Maningning (6),

BY TOP CHOICE

Money Maker (8)
Race 9—(Tri)—Hear Me (5), Sand Peebles (1), Reign Supreme (2)
Race 10—(Ort/Tri)—Hezabellagio (4), Cool Operator (5), Iron Mic (3), Dulce My Love (1)
Race 11—(Super 6/Ort/Tri)—Friendly Fire (10), Jokes Only (4), Nico's Incharge (5), Betchabygollywow (11)
Race 12—(Ort/Tri)—Juanito's Dream/Lolek D'Great (6), Gallant Warrior (3), Real Tough (1), Speed Admiral (4)
Race 13—(Super 6/Ort/Tri)—Step On The Gas (3), Overture (1), Dixe Dash (2), King Aljhun (9), Big Boss (7), Sakura Ijhay (4)

Devance is Unity Cup MVP

By Jasmine W. Payo

IT WAS QUITE OBVIOUS THAT FIL-Am Joe Devance was one of the reasons why Toyota Otis has gone from worst to first.

But when Devance bagged the Most Valuable Player plum in the PBL Unity Cup yesterday, he made it clear that the turnaround didn't happen overnight.

Quite humbly, the 6-foot-7 center admitted he needed time to adjust in his debut in the last conference.

"The guys in Toyota Otis, they're the real MVP. Without them I won't be here," said Devance, who averaged 14.5 points, 9.2 rebounds, 1.5 assists and 1.2 blocks and led the Sparks to the best record in the elimination round.

A recruit from University of Texas-El Paso, Devance garnered 443.28 points (293.46 statistical points, 149.82 player-media votes) to also lead the members of the PBL First Team that had Magnolia Fil-Am Kelly Williams, who was second in the MVP balloting.

After averaging 17.3 points, 12.8 rebounds, 1.4 assists, the high-flying Williams collected 357.58 points (322.27 statistical points, 35.31 player-media votes).

Rain or Shine forward Jojo Tangkay, the MVP of the last conference, Hapee-PCU's Jason Castro and Granny Goose's JR Quinahan joined the two Fil-Americans in the Mythical Five.

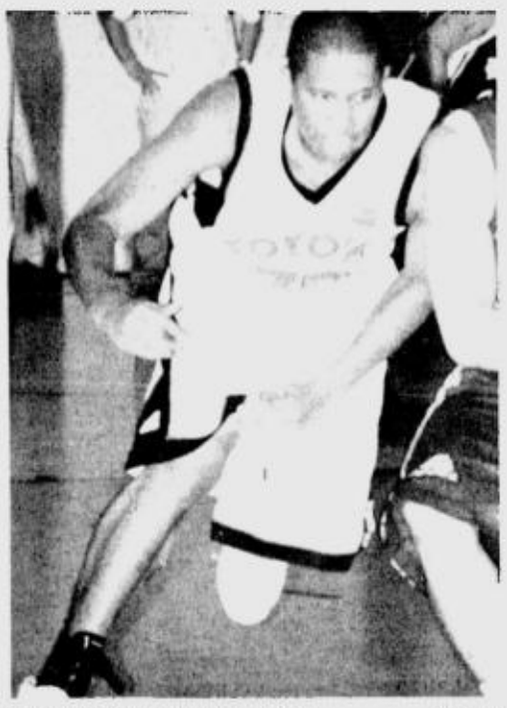
Magnolia's Arwind Santos and Rain or Shine's Marvin Ortiguerra led the second team, along with Montana cagers Alex Compton, Al Magpayo and Ken Bono.

Larry Rodriguez, Montana's new recruit from the Philippine Maritime Institute, bagged the Fantastic Freshman award.

As the most improved player this conference, Bono earned the Quantum Leap citation.

Other awardees included Granny Goose's Jireh Ibañes as the Defensive Stopper, Toyota Otis guard JV Casio as the True Gentleman and Harbour Centre's Joseph Yeo as the Fan Favorite.

Harbour Centre's LA Tenorio received the Academic All-Star award, while TeleTech mentor Jerry Codinera was honored with the Quotable Coach citation.



DEVANCE: Tower of power RYAN LIM

San Andres shares Endurocross glory

VETERAN RIDER GLENN AGUILAR WON the Pro Open division of the 2nd leg of 2006 Endurocross at the Timberland Heights Raceway in San Mateo, Rizal, but the real newsmaker was youthful Kenneth San Andres.

Aguilar stamped his class in the one-day motocross festival, but he had to share the spotlight with his Revtex teammate San Andres, who came behind him in the premier Pro Open by a mere six seconds.

So stunning was San Andres that he fended off the challenge of motocross stalwarts Jolet Jao (3rd), Bebet dela Cruz (4th) and Donald Yuson.

"I did not expect Kenneth's development to be this fast," said Kenneth's father-coach Jun-Jun San Andres. "Only last year, *puro mga bata pa ang kalaban niya*, but now, look at the field he is dominating. It's amazing considering that this is just his first year in the pro classes."

In the recent, Kaogma Festival Invitational Motocross in Camarines Sur organized by Gov. Luis Raymund Villafuerte Jr., San Andres, last year's Expert National champion of the NAMSSA (National Motorcycle Sports and Safety Association), had the same overpowering show against the veterans.

Next to Pro 125 winner Aguilar, San Andres shoved to the backseat veterans Jerry Beech (3rd), Alvin Beech (4th) and Bani Leyba (5th).

San Andres' development as a young rider oozing with potential took a big turn when he trained last year in the US under motocross guru and former champion Jim Gibson.

"I learned a lot from that US training, it boosted my confidence no end," said San Andres, who is backed by Caltex Revtex, Oakley, KTM, HJC Helmets, Bridgestone Tires, Fox, Renthal, Alpine Star, Inside Racing Magazine and JBS Motorcycle Parts.

KENNETH San Andres (airborne) shares the spotlight with teammate Glenn Aguilar after shoving to the backseat veterans Jolet Jao and Bebet dela Cruz in the 2nd leg of the Endurocross.

Cambel rules Rotary golfest

GUEST PLAYER DANNY CAMBEL emerged as the biggest individual winner while RC New Manila East B captured the overall team championship in the recent Rotary District 3780 "Golf for a Cause" tournament at the Tagaytay Midlands course in Tagaytay City.

Cambell aced hole No. 12 to win a massage chair from OSIM Philippines.

RC New Manila East B took the coveted PDG Pete Morales Jr. Memorial Cup by edging RC Diliman B, 117 to 115 points. RC Diliman B settled for the Division II crown.

RC Metro West ruled Division I with 110 points, topping RC Quezon City A by three points, while RC Metro West triangle C ran away with the Division III plum by beating host RC San Francisco del Monte, 113-105.

Metro West Triangle's Jess Ronsayro won low gross honor with 81 in the individual competition. RC Diliman's Elmer Magnate emerged overall net champion by nosing out RC Manila East's Chito Borromeo, 41-40.

Borromeo took top Flight C honors while RC Quezon City's Popoy Flores topped Flight A with 38 points and RC Metro West triangle's Pete Lopez ruled Flight B with 39.

Cambell triumphed in the guests division with Roland Kapunan finishing second.

RC Metro West Triangle swept the top three divisions in the team event, unseating defending champion RC Quezon City in Division I.

Fiba never suspended BAP

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

JOEY ROMASANTA IS RIGHT. IT ASsured us of nothing.

I refer to the reported positive response of Fiba-Asia regarding Joey Lina's request to have the BAP suspension lifted by the international basketball federation (Fiba).

As reported by Joey Lina, the BAP president, his resolution asking Fiba-Asia to ask the Fiba Central Board to lift the alleged (yes, alleged) BAP suspension by Fiba has been "unanimously approved" during the reported Fiba-Asia congress in Kuwait. Joey Lina said he was there.

Fine, but first things first.

The Fiba-Asia is basketball for Asia.

The Fiba Central Board is basketball for the world.

The Fiba, the mother of all Fibas today, is practically ruled only by two men—the retired but still very influential Borislav Stankovic, and his anointed sec-gen successor, Patrick Baumann.

Of the three, Fiba fires and hires, is the alpha and omega. It is the be-it-all in basketball.

I shook hands with Stankovic in 1983 in Hong Kong during the ABC, when he was still Mr. Fiba. When we say Mr. Fiba, that means Stankovic was "bossing" and his word in Fiba then was the law.

It still is, but that's another story.

In Hong Kong in 1983, when rival teams questioned the presence of naturalized Filipinos in the RP Team, Stankovic immediately ruled—almost single-handedly—that Dennis Still, Jeff Moore and Chip Engelland were not qualified to play for the Philippines. His stunning decision came months after Stankovic's assurance to Doc Carrascoso and Quinito Henson, traveling to Europe for this sole purpose, of the trio's eligibility to play for the country.

I saw Stankovic again last March in Seoul during the Olympic Summit there. He seemed still in control of Fiba, firing instructions here and there to Baumann, his 37-year-old *niño bonito*, or *unico hijo*, if you wish. One such obvious instruction was for Baumann to reject the plea of our basketball stakeholders flying to Seoul that Philippine basketball be reinstated by the Fiba so that we can join the Asian Games in Doha, Qatar, in December.

"We will only lift the Philippine suspension if Mr. Joey Lina signs the by-laws of Pilipinas Basketball," Baumann told stakeholders Noli Eala of PBA, Chino Trinidad of PBL, Jun Jun Capistrano of UAAP and Paul Supan of NCAA.

Some three months after Baumann had said that, Joey Lina, who had walked out of the basketball stakeholders summit weeks before Eala and Co. met up with Baumann, has yet to affix his signature to the constitution and by-laws of Pilipinas Basketball.

Pilipinas Basketball, in case you've forgotten, is the accepted and endorsed replacement for the expelled BAP from the country's Olympic movement.

Joey Lina saying Fiba has suspended the BAP is misleading, if not confusing us all.

It's not funny, anymore.

For the record, the BAP was never suspended by Fiba. What Fiba suspended was Philippine basketball—the reason we didn't have basketball in the last SEA Games in Manila.

How can you suspend an association that has been expelled? Deleted. Erased. Killed.

The POC expulsion of the BAP triggered Fiba's suspension of Philippine basketball—the reason we were not also allowed to play in the Asean Championships and ABC last year because, like the SEA Games, both were also Fiba-sanctioned.

So, what is there to rejoice about?

How can Fiba's Baumann lift a BAP suspension when there's no BAP suspension at all?

What Joey Lina did was bark up the wrong tree.

He was, in effect, like prescribing a medicine for headache when what was really needed was a pill for toothache.

Baumann has actually given Joey Lina the cure-all prescription—sign the Pilipinas Basketball by-laws. That was last March yet.

One not wanting to be cured is hopeless.

One insisting on a cure for a non-disease is doomed.

One not asleep is the hardest to wake up.

* * *

Send comments to menju@pldtdsl.net

Explorers subdue Warriors, gain outright semis seat

PAGADIAN CITY—MAYOR SAMMY Co's Pagadian Explorers gained an outright semifinals seat in the southern division of the 2006 Guerrero Brandy-NBC national basketball championship Friday by subduing the Iloilo Warriors, 89-85, at the city gym here.

The Explorers ended their classification round campaign tied with the Iligan Crusaders at 11-3 but got the second seeding through the winner-over-the-other rule.

Over at the San Juan gym in Manila, NBC executive vice president and Mayor Bambol Tolentino's Batang Tagaytay squad turned back Bacchus/Harbour Centre, 70-64, to raise its record to 5-5.

MJ Caceres played his best game so far to give Tagaytay the victory.

Bacchus/Harbour dropped to 6-5 behind the northern division's No. 1 seed Spring-Parañaque, in the tourney sponsored by Panasonic, Sulpicio Lines, Nature's Spring Mineral Water, Spring Cooking Oil, Regend Foods, Firefly Lightings, Molten and Prime Channel.

Behind 46-48, the Explorers rallied behind ex-pros Bong Marata and Peter Naron to seize 56-48 lead with 6:25 remaining.

The scores:

PAGADIAN 89—Naron 28, Marata 18, Daja 16, Cortez 10, Singco 6, Omandam 3, Lanutan 2, Quilo 2, Singedas 2, Ayuk 2, Orquillas 0, Pamaran 0, Gatumbato 0.

ILOILO 85—Balgos 26, Senlerez 23, R. Singco 12, Sanz 11, Sencil 8, Leonida 5, Poral 0, Bautista 0, Unarce 0, Sina-on 0.

Quarters: 20-21, 44-46, 69-58, 89-85.

TAGAYTAY 70—Caceres 15, Gulyab 11, Robillos 10, Marquez 7, Reyes 7, Mendoza 5, Genido 3, Sta. Maria 0, Finuliar 0.

BACCHUS/HARBOUR 64—Membrere 18, Aquino 17, Pribdhas 7, Retaga 6, Masbang 6, Pile 5, Coyukang 3, Cuevas 2, Hardin 0, Sta. Cruz 0.

Quarters: 16-19, 28-36, 49-52, 70-64.

Ex-PFF head now working on SEC issue

By Musong R. Castillo

FORMER PHILIPPINE FOOTBALL FEDERATION president Rene Adad is now working on the reinstatement of the PFF with the Securities and Exchange Commission as soon as possible.

Adad, now living in retirement in Bacolod after serving two terms as PFF president until 2003, was asked by the Philippine Olympic Committee earlier in the week to "take the lead in the resolution of this problem (with the SEC)."

The SEC had revoked the PFF's certificate of incorporation as early as Nov. 3, 2003 and the POC is worried that it would "create doubts on the PFF's legal capacity to act, including receiving assistance from its benefactors."

The Olympic body's legal counsel, Ding Tanjuatco, signed the letter, which also exhorted all football stakeholders to band together and get the PFF reinstated.

"The POC cannot turn a blind eye to this disturbing development," Tanjuatco wrote.

Adad, incidentally, was endorsed by the National Capital Region Football Association to the POC, saying Adad is the "legal" president of the PFF as the election of Johnny Romualdez came on Nov. 30, 2003, or after the revocation of the SEC registration.

"I am sure that (Johnny) Romualdez will not let go of his mandate," Adad told the INQUIRER in a long distance interview. "But if I am mandated by the SEC and if it is for the good of the PFF, then why not?

"But right now, my only priority is to see to it that all the requirements needed by the SEC are produced by the PFF as soon as possible."

Romualdez, meanwhile, has called on the PFF board to convene on Saturday and find a solution to this problem.

"We cannot do it overnight," Romualdez, who arrived from Germany on Friday, told the INQUIRER over the phone yesterday.

Romualdez said that he never knew that the PFF registration was revoked.

Romualdez said he is aware that not having the association reinstated with the SEC would mean that the Philippine Sports Commission can cut all financial aid to the PFF.

POLAND'S Marcin Baszczynski (right) towers over Ecuador's Neicer Reasco during their Group A, World Cup 2006 soccer match in Gelsenkirchen, Germany, Friday. The other teams in Group A are Germany and Costa Rica. AP

Germans rip Costa Rica XI

MUNICH—HOST NATION GERMANY WELCOMED THEIR OPENING 4-2 World Cup win over Costa Rica with open arms on Saturday but concerns were expressed about the defensive errors that continue to haunt the team.

"Dream goals but our defense is a nightmare," headlined Bild daily, the country's best-selling newspaper.

"The defense is a real concern. We Germans would like less tension. The defense is torturing us. A last 16 exit to Sweden or England could be on the cards," it added.

Germany treated their fans to a goal fest in Munich on Friday with Miroslav Klose scoring twice while defender Philipp Lahm and Torsten Frings were also on target with great individual strikes.

But Costa Rica replied twice with Paulo Wanchope, the country's best football export, netting both goals as the German backline looked far from accomplished.

"Successful start glosses over mistakes," concluded Die Welt. "Once again the defense showed huge weaknesses against the harmless central Americans."

The Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung agreed, saying: "Lots of goals and lots of mistakes in opener."

Local newspaper the Munchner Merkur said half of the equation was right for World Cup success.

"Costa Rica show the German team their attack is good enough but their defense isn't," it opined.

Germany manager Jurgen Klinsmann insisted three points on the board was the main thing.

"Of course we would rather have had a clean sheet but the most important thing was a winning start," Klinsmann said.

"Opponents will always get chances but there are a lot of positives." The performance of left-back Lahm, recently recovered from an elbow injury, was one positive with his defensive display capped by a fine curling shot for the opening goal.

"I do not know how I scored it otherwise I would do it all the time," admitted Lahm. *AFP*

Ecuador trounces Poland, 2-0

GELSENKIRCHEN, GERMANY—Ecuador found it can win at sea level, too. And at the World Cup, no less.

Playing in front of a boisterous pro-Polish crowd and far away from the comforts—and high altitude—of home, the team that struggled on the road in qualifying came through with one of its biggest wins over thousands of kilometers (miles) from Ecuador.

Agustin Delgado set up a first-half goal and added his own score in the 80th minute to quiet the Polish fans with a 2-0 victory Friday night in the World Cup opener for both teams.

Their credentials questioned because seven of their eight qualifying wins came more than 2,700 meters (9,000 feet) above sea level at their home stadium in Quito, the Ecuadoreans got off to strong start near sea level at their second World Cup.

"Ecuador was always criticized and what they were saying about Ecuador was you can only win when you're playing at a very high altitude," coach Luis Suarez said. "But despite the atmosphere and the low altitude, we managed to win."

After losing its first two matches on the way to first-round elimination at its World Cup debut in 2002, Ecuador is tied atop Group A with Germany, which beat Costa Rica 4-2. Ecuador plays Costa Rica on Thursday. *AP*

Togo coach quits over pay dispute

MUNICH—TOGO COACH OTTO PFISTER HAS QUIT his job with the World Cup debutants due to an unresolved dispute over bonus payments among the squad.

Togo FA president Rock Gnassingbe confirmed in a short telephone interview with Reuters on Saturday that Pfister had left—"he has gone"—but would give no further details.

A Fifa spokesman for Togo added: "Mr. Otto Pfister had a meeting with Mr. FA president Rock Gnassingbe last night and left at around 0200 (local time) and said he was finished with the Togo team.

The hotel that hosts the Togolese team in Wangen during its World Cup preparation said Pfister was still at the hotel.

"It is too bad he's left because it worked well, Togo and Otto Pfister. But the situation was no longer sustainable for the coach," team doctor Joachim Schubert was quoted as saying on the respected German magazine Kicker.

Rank outsiders Togo, who are based in the city of Wangen, play their first Group G match against South Korea in Frankfurt on Tuesday.

Their other opening-round foes are Switzerland on June 19 and France on June 23.

The players had demanded 155,000 euros ($196,200) each to play in the tournament plus 30,000 each per win and 15,000 per draw. Officials from the small West African country said it was too much money. It remained unclear who would now coach the team at the World Cup. *Reuters*

MATTHEW Martin Dy Buncio (left) and Nicholas James Dy Buncio.

Dy Buncio brods rule WW tourney

THE DY BUNCIO BROTHERS dominated the 1st Wack Wack Golf and Country Club Summer Youth tournament recently.

Matthew Martin Dy Buncio emerged the runaway winner in the Beginners Division while older brother, Nicholas James, ruled the Advanced Division.

Joel Alviar, coordinator of the meet held at the West Course, said Matthew bested a field of 20 aspiring golfers in the nine-years-old-and-below category.

"He (Matthew) was one of the youngest in the field at age 5 which makes his performance more remarkable," said Alviar. "He had a five-stroke lead over the second best player."

Nicolas James also fared well in the 10-11-years-old division, which he topped for the second straight year. Alviar said Nicky won over talented players, some of whom already saw action in the Philippine junior golf competition.

The Dy Buncio brothers used Dexter shoes and Proline Junior Star golf equipment—a golf starter set which includes irons, a driver, a putter, a pitching wedge and a golf bag.

Alviar added the Dy Buncio brothers are among the bright stars in Wack Wack's roster of young golfers, noting that the club has been the breeding ground of some of the country's top golfers such as Gerard Cantada.

Caoili dubbed Kournikova of chess

THE PHILIPPINE WOMEN'S TEAM HAD A breakthrough finish in the World Chess Olympiad held recently in Turin, Italy. But none of its members grabbed as much spotlight as a compatriot who represented another country.

Arianne Bo Caoili, who represented Australia in the Olympiad, found herself in the center of a ticklish romantic controversy that had the chess world dubbing her the Anna Kournikova of the sport.

This, after two Grandmasters got into a fracas apparently trying to get the attention of the 20-year-old Filipino-Australian beauty.

The melee prompted several checks into Caoili's background and soon enough, people were comparing her to the Russian Kournikova, tennis' former favorite poster girl.

In fact, the World Chess Beauty Contest website ranks Caoili as seventh on its list of the sport's beauties.

And adding to her mystique is her take on chess, which she says she enjoys because "it is "fighting for the mere pleasure of fighting."

"There is nothing like arguing for the mere pleasure of arguing. It is my weakness to sometimes start a random friction between myself and another to test reactions/psyche, get amused, or simply to relax. Of course there are also arguments that actually matter."

CAOILI

GM Levon Aronian, board one of the champion Armenian team, and English GM Danny Gormally had to be pulled apart by witnesses to the melee at the Hiroshima Mon Amour nightclub apparently because the two quarreled over Caoili.

Gormally allegedly either punched or shoved the Armenian to the grour.d.

The next day, supporters of Aronian, 23, got payback when they attacked Gormally, 30, as he sat in a cafe. The controversy spread like wildfire that the English GM had to quit the sport's biggest stage and fly back home to England. Aronian, on the other hand, is expected to meet up with Caoili soon in Germany.

"All I know is that they like each other and they'll see each other in Germany, and if it develops, I don't know," said Caoili's mother, Annette.

"Aronian didn't do anything," Annette added. "He's a very nice guy. He's a superstar in the chess world. She was just dancing. It was not provoked, and this guy (Gormally) went a little bit strange and punched Aronian. Aronian didn't get hurt or anything—he still won the championship."

Born in the Philippines, Brisbane-based Caoili was a child chess prodigy and aspires to be a singer. Marlon Bernardino, contributor

DREAM SUNDAY SHOWDOWN

Federer, Nadal dispute French Open crown

PARIS—AWFUL AT THE START, MASTERFUL ENOUGH LATer to produce shots that must be seen to be believed, Roger Federer leaned back in his sideline seat and exhaled.

His opponent Friday had just quit with an injury, and a smile slowly crept across Federer's face as he realized that a berth in his first French Open final was secured, a fourth consecutive Grand Slam title now merely one victory away.

Ah, but what a victory that will have to be: No. 1 Federer now faces No. 2 Rafael Nadal, the defending champion, winner of 59 straight matches on clay, and owner of a 5-1 career mark against the Swiss star.

Each of the previous three years, one of the French Open finalists was unseeded. Now fans will be treated to the tournament's first final between men seeded 1-2 since 1984, and so much else is at stake for Federer on Sunday. He's trying to become only the third man in tennis history to win four majors in a row, the first since Rod Laver in 1969. He also can become the sixth man to collect a career Grand Slam.

"Quarters, semis—it's all nice and stuff," Federer said, "but you want to go out there on the Sunday."

Superstar

And he usually does. He's reached the final at his last 14 tournaments, the longest such streak since Ivan Lendl's 18 in a row in 1981-82. The last time Federer failed to make it to a final? When he lost to Nadal in the 2005 French Open semifinals.

"Federer is a superstar," Nadal said. "If I don't play at 100 percent, I'm going to lose, for sure."

Nadal might downplay his chances against Roger Federer in the French Open final, but the 20-year-old Spaniard talks tough when it comes to video games.

"I don't think he can beat me in PlayStation," Nadal said. "I don't think he trains enough for that."

Against No. 3 David Nalbandian on Friday, Federer went from stunningly bad to as good as he gets, and was leading, 3-6, 6-4, 5-2, when the Argentine stopped because of a strained abdominal muscle.

Hour of magic

Spectators who paid good euros for their tickets might have been upset to be witness to the first French Open men's semifinal to end in retirement, the record ninth of the tournament. Then again, they did get to watch an hour of magic from Federer, plus more than 2½ hours of Nadal in all of his scrambling, leaping, fist-pumping glory in the day's second match, a 6-4, 6-2, 7-6 (7) victory over No. 4 Ivan Ljubicic.

Nadal handled Ljubicic's booming serve with nary a problem and overcame the one tense moment, down 5-3 in the tiebreaker, with the help of two aces of his own. Nadal also conjured up several crisp passing shots on the fly, including one forehand he celebrated by scampering the width of the court before thrusting a leaping uppercut.

After Ljubicic missed a volley to end it, Nadal put his racket down, then went to the middle of the court and dropped to his knees, raising his arms.

"Maybe the final of Grand Slam always is exciting, no?" Nadal said.

No such joyous display for Federer after his semifinal's odd denouement. Then again, Federer generally doesn't emote much, and he never betrayed a shred of anger or angst during his disastrous first 39 minutes against Nalbandian.

Falling behind by a set and 3-0, Federer whiffed on a service return, clanked shots off his racket frame, sent groundstrokes long or wide by several feet, even shanked a ball into the stands.

"It was important for him to figure out what was going on and turn things around," said Federer's coach, 1966 French Open champion Tony Roche. "There's tremendous pressure on him but, so far, he's shown he's capable of handling it."

Swirling wind

Federer blamed his woes on the swirling wind that rippled the players' shirts, and he credited Nalbandian, too, for playing well.

Suddenly, Federer's touch was back. In the second set's fourth game, Nalbandian ripped a backhand down the line, and Federer reached down—his racket striking the clay—to chop a forehand winner. Shocked, Nalbandian watched the ball sail past, his feet rooted to the ground.

Federer finally mustered his first break point in the next game, when Nalbandian said his injury flared up, and a double-fault made it 3-2.

Two games later came the shot of the tournament. With Federer forward, Nalbandian lofted a lob to the corner. Federer spun and chugged after the ball, his back to the net. At the last instant, he wheeled back all the way around to face the court, somehow got his body out of the way, and flicked a forehand winner.

Federer held up his left index finger, as if to remind everyone who's No. 1, while fans saluted the flourish with a standing ovation.

"I couldn't play it between the legs, so I had to turn again. Then I thought, 'What do I do now?'" Federer explained. "That was a piece of good luck." *AP*

SPAIN'S Rafael Nadal jubilates after winning a point against Croatian Ivan Ljubicic. AFP

Tarver wants a little respect

ATLANTIC CITY—ON THE BIG screen, Antonio Tarver is Mason Dixon, a loud-mouthed, brash and boastful champion with a gnawing hunger for respect who is determined to get it by knocking out fictional boxing legend Rocky.

In real life, Antonio Tarver is pretty much the same guy.

Friday night at the Boardwalk Hall in Atlantic City, Tampa's own loud-mouthed, brash and boastful champion with a gnawing hunger for respect is determined to get it by knocking out boxing legend Bernard Hopkins.

"I want to continue to be a star, and the only way you can be a star in this game is you've got to perform," Tarver said. "You know I have gone on the record saying (Hopkins) won't see the sixth round and I mean that. Hopefully he comes to fight like he talks and if he does that then you can expect another Tommy Hearns vs. Marvin Hagler."

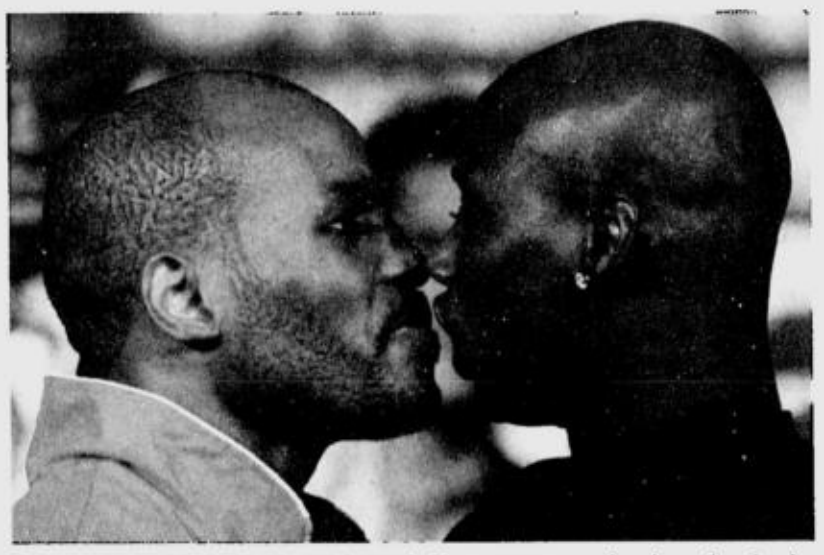
Tarver (24-3), the IBO light heavyweight champion, highlights the main event of an HBO pay-per-view card.

Will a victory finally send him into the arms of the boxing public? Will he finally get the respect he seems so desperate for?

"It's his motivation," said boxing historian Bert Sugar.

Whether Tarver truly believes he is being disrespected isn't as important as the reaction from fans, which has been lukewarm.

And Tarver's self-hyped persona as a "legend killer" doesn't sell. Fans don't like to see their legends beaten, much less have the grave danced on, and the fact is, Tarver's beaten only one legend:



BERNARD Hopkins (left) and Antonio Tarver taunt each other after both tipping the scales at 174 pounds during the weigh-in. AFP

Roy Jones Jr.

The first time came by stunning knockout, but Tarver followed that by wearing a crown to the ring in his next fight. He lost—the fight and his momentum.

He won the rematch, and then beat Jones again by decision in a fight that clearly showed the former champ was in serious decline.

That didn't stop Tarver from squeezing every last drop out of the second-round knockout of Jones.

Hopkins (46-4-1) chided him at Thursday's final news conference as a one-hit wonder for his knockout of Jones, comparing him to Vanilla Ice and Milli Vanilli.

Tarver vows to make it two hits.

He's amazed that he, and not Hopkins—hardly a popular fighter until two losses to Jermain Taylor made him something of a sympathetic character—is the villain tonight.

He thinks his accomplishments are being the media, and fans who don't appreciate him. He can beat a guy who was champion for 10 years and made 20 title defenses, but he'll still be reminded that Hopkins is 41.

"The puzzling thing to me is that every time I fight someone, they want to look at all the negatives in my opponent," Tarver said. "But they don't want to look at the positives in me. Now people want to say that Bernard Hopkins is over the hill. He is old, but he wasn't too old when Jermain Taylor was fighting him, a guy that's 10 years my youth." *NYTimes News Service*

After shabby opener, Mavs, Heat promise better Game Two

DALLAS—WHEN JOSH HOWARD IMAGINED playing in the NBA finals, he really thought the whole experience would be a bit more magical than this.

Sure, all of Dallas pulsed with excitement during the week-long buildup, and the pregame ceremonies were spine-tingling. But once the Mavericks and the Miami Heat finally got down to playing Game 1, Howard felt Dallas' 90-80 win in the error-plagued opener looked much more like a lazy midsummer pickup game—and nobody wins a trophy after one of those.

"It was kind of a bad game for both teams, which you don't expect when you think about being here," said Howard. "That's not how it goes down when you're playing as a kid in the driveway, or you're on a video game."

Howard's critique was echoed Friday by both clubs as they began two days off before Game 2 on Sunday night. Everybody promised to do better next time—and Miami coach Pat Riley and Dallas' Avery Johnson seemed confident they've got time to manage the mountain of mistakes and mangled game plans left from the opener.

For starters, both coaches are determined to get starring efforts from their star players—because Dirk Nowitzki, Shaquille O'Neal and Dwyane Wade all left ample room for improvement after Game 1.

"The key is not to have two games like that in a row," said O'Neal, who had 17 points and seven rebounds but didn't touch the ball nearly enough for Miami. "So I'll be hard on myself these next two days, and then hopefully on Sunday, I could play a little bit better."

While cooling down after a light practice at their arena, the Mavericks acknowledged they felt the pressure of the sellout crowd and a generation of long-suffering Dallas fans anticipating this first shot at a title. Of course, they're always aware of high expectations when their boss, owner Mark Cuban, is sitting near them, peering into the huddle—and now blogging about their play during the game.

"I think they've gotten it out of their system now," Johnson said. "We had some jitters and they know we didn't play a perfect game. We obviously have a lot of room for improvement. We didn't meet our goals offensively and defensively.

DIRK Nowitzki gets into a little World Cup action, treating a basketball like a soccer ball during a light moment in the Dallas Mavericks practice. AP

Jason Terry's 32 points carried the Mavs, but many of their flaws were centered on Nowitzki, who scored just 16 points—none in the fourth quarter—of his finals debut.

The Mavericks didn't have trouble getting the ball to Nowitzki, but he lacked the ineffable offensive aggression of his best games—and his beautiful jumper wasn't falling.

So the Heat shut down Nowitzki, played at their own tempo, got 28 points from an ailing Wade and became the first team to outrebound Dallas in the playoffs—and still lost. Like Wade's legs, they faltered in the fourth quarter, never raising their games to a level befitting the finals. *AP*

NBA Finals viewing at Robinson's

THE BIGGEST EVER NBA FINALS viewing party in the Philippines will be held tomorrow at Robinson's Movieworld Galleria at 8 a.m.

Over 800 guests are expected to watch the Dallas Mavericks and the Miami Heat dispute Game 2 of the ongoing championship series.

Tickets to the party are availed of via radio promotions on K-Lite 103.5 and Magic 89.9 until today. Radio listeners are asked to watch out for the DJ's cue to become the right number caller.

NBA fans will be treated to a virtual NBA game experience at the party. Upon entering, fans will be asked to select their team and Miami fans will occupy one side of the cinema while Dallas fans will be seated on the other.

Presented by Coca-Cola and Solar Sports, in association with Spalding, the event will give fans the chance to win bigger prizes like Spalding basketballs, NBA jerseys, NBA VCDs from Warner Home Video, NBA Live video games from Electronic Arts, and Upper Deck trading cards.

DELASIN: Unnoticed. REUTERS

Delasin takes clubhouse lead of LPGA championship

HAVRE DE GRACE, MARYLAND—MICHELLE Wie had a revelation as she watched birdie putts keep falling into the cup Friday in the LPGA Championship, even though they didn't belong to her.

"It was like, 'Oh, the ball can go in the hole,'" she said.

Wie eventually made enough of her own for a 4-under 68 that allowed her to keep pace with Fil-Am Dorothy Delasin and climb into the hunt at Bulle Rock Golf Club on a beautiful morning that yielded to the rumble of storms.

Delasin ran off five birdies in a six-hole stretch to build a big lead, only to give most of it back by hooking her tee shot into the woods for a double bogey and chunking a chip out of an old divot that led to bogey on one of the easiest holes. She wound up with a 1-under 71 and was the clubhouse leader at 6-under 138.

Thunderstorms halted play for five hours, and half the field didn't finish the second round when it was suspended by darkness. With a moon visible in darkening skies, Pat Hurst was at 8 under through 10 holes.

Annika Sorenstam, who joined Wie at a listless 71 in the first round, also was headed in the right direction. She made two birdies in eight holes and was at 3 under. The three-time defending champion will have to play 28 holes Saturday, weather permitting.

Wie still didn't get much out of another superb game from the tee box and fairways. She wound up at 5-under 139.

"I'm playing really well right now, and if I can just get things going, I think I can shoot really low out here," said Wie, who has been under par in all six rounds at Bulle Rock dating to last year.

Nicole Castrale, who began this major with a career-best 64, stumbled to a 75 and joined Wie in the group at 139 with Mi Hyun Kim (71) and Shi Hyun Ahn (70).

Most of the attention was with Wie, and the small gallery got a bonus with Delasin.

Delasin goes about her business so quietly that when she made a detour to use the bathroom, no one realized she was gone until she nudged through a few fans to get back inside the ropes.

"I was swinging it good and I was putting really well," Delasin said. "I just put myself in contention for the weekend, and I want to keep the momentum up."

Delasin, who won the US Junior Girls and the US Women's Amateur, had no complaints playing alongside Wie, who drew a gallery.

"When I was winning, leading tournaments, the crowds were the same, so it wasn't a big deal," she said. "I like having people watch, whether they're watching me or Michelle or anybody." *AP*

B. Pacquiao risks title vs Kelley today

By Salven L. Lagumbay

DETERMINED TO GET OUT OF HIS BROTHER's more illustrious shadows, Bobby Pacquiao plunges into action today in a fight that will shape his own marquee status against solid opponent Kevin Kelley in a 12-round defense of his WBC Continental Americas superfeatherweight title at the famed Madison Square Garden in New York.

Solar Sports, the leading sports channel, will air the fight on a slightly delayed telecast starting at 10 a.m. today.

Bobby, the younger brother of superstar Manny Pacquiao, has logged in 120 rounds of sparring to prepare for Kelley, who has loudly claimed that today, Pacquiao's luck will run out, alluding to the Filipino's previous win over Carlos Hernandez in a somewhat controversial fashion.

"Bobby looks great and is confident about this fight. For him this is a big break, to fight in New York and at Madison Square Gardens—the mecca of boxing. He is calling all the Filipinos to support him on this fight as he tries to do his best in the ring come June 10th and hopes to put a good fight and come out victorious," said Filipino priest Marlon Beof, a close friend of the Pacquiao brothers, who is now based in New York.

Pacquiao (26-11-3, 11 KO's) versus Kelley (58-6-2, 39 KO's) is in the undercard of the Miguel Cotto-Paulie Malignaggi WBO junior welterweight showdown, which will also be aired by Solar.

Filipino trainer Buboy Fernandez, who helped renowned trainer Freddie Roach in the younger Pacquiao's preparations, said his ward is in terrific shape and looks upbeat on his chances against the former WBC featherweight champ Kelley.

At yesterday's weigh-in held at the MSG, the southpaw Pacquiao came in at 129.5 lbs, while Kelley checked in at 128 lbs.

Pacquiao, however, will miss Roach in his corner today, as the latter is preparing his more popular brother in Los Angeles for the July 2 showdown with Oscar Larios.

PRACTICE SESSION: German Ferrari driver Michael Schumacher sits in his car in the pits of the Silvestone racetrack during the second practice session, two days before the Formula one British Grand Prix 9 in Silverstone. AFP

Pantua leads Copa winners

ERNESTO PANTUA III DEFEATED RYAN ALBA, 6-2, 6-1, yesterday to lead the first-round winners in the boys' 18-under division of the 7th Copa de Manila Age-Group Tennis Championships at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.

In other matches, Gilbert Alza downed Vincent Atienza, 6-3, 6-1, Johnwill Baldonado prevailed over Ronaldo de Castro, 6-1, 7-5, Kean Barraquias outplayed Gerald Gaspar, 6-3, 6-3, and Daniel Luis Macalino trounced Mark Daniel Flores, 6-2, 6-1.

Also advancing were Christopher Vianzon, James Carl Canete, Jeffrey Villanueva, Joseph Baldonado, Reymund Padigos, Ken Patrick Arevalo and John Michael Tamayo.

In the boys' 14-under division, Nicole Magaway outclassed Ali Imran Arsad, 6-0, 6-1, to advance against Jorel Vincent Buenaflor, who blasted Aldrick Olivan, 6-0, 6-0.

Other winners were Marco Suntay over Martin de Castro, 6-3, 7-6 (3), Leander Lazaro over Eugene Alza, 6-1, 6-4, Lorence Brasia over Emar Anavizo, 7-6 (4), 6-4, Neil Patrick Paez over Hans Angelo Asistio, 7-5, 7-5, and Ray John Ogayon over Uriel Comes, 6-4, 6-1.

The two-weekend netfest is a project of Manila City Vice Mayor and Confederation of Tennis Clubs Philippines Inc. president Danilo Lacuna.

Torre bows to Akobian in round 7

FILIPINO GRANDMASTER EUGENE TORRE LOST HIS BID FOR A top finish by bowing to GM Varuzhan Akobian of the United States in the seventh round of the second San Marino International Chess Open Friday at the Kursaal Congress Centre in Republic of San Marino.

The win gave Akobian 6 points and a tie for the lead with top seed GM Sergei Tiviakov of the Netherlands, GM Vadim Milov of Switzerland and GM Merab Gagunashvili of Georgia.

The 54-year-old Torre, who beat Croatian Fide Master Darko Doric in the sixth round, got stuck at 5 points and dropped into a big logjam for 8th to 17th places that includes GM Dmitry Svetushkin of Moldova, the Filipino's eighth and penultimate round opponent.

GM Mark Paragua, FM Wesley So and reigning national champion Darwin Laylo all scored 1.5 points in the sixth and seventh rounds to tie Filipino compatriot and newly installed IM Oliver Dimakiling at 4.5 points.

Paragua, 22, the country's top-ranked player with an ELO rating of 2617, downed WGM Joanna Dworakowska of Poland in then sixth round and settled for a truce with compatriot Dimakiling in the seventh.

So, 12, and the youngest RP member to the Olympiad, halved the point with GM Salvador Del Rio Angelis of Spain in the sixth then subdued IM Jacek Stopa of Poland in the seventh.

Laylo, 26, upset GM Viorel Iordachescu of Moldova in the sixth then split the point with GM Sarunas Sulskis of Lithuania in the seventh.

Dimakiling had earlier yielded to Ukrainian GM Malakhatko in the sixth.

Another Filipino entry, NM Rolando Nolte, succumbed to GM Vladislav Nevednichy of Romania in then sixth then beat WIM Katarzyna Toma of Poland in the seventh to join the 4-pointers.

Torre and Svetushkin were in the company of GM Vladimir Epishin of Russia, GM Jaan Ehlvest of Estonia, GM Tomasz Markowski of Poland, GM Vadim Malakhatko of Ukraine, GM Michele Godena of Italy, GM Nenad Sulava of Croatia, IM Mikulas Manik of Slovakia and IM Parimarjan Negi of India.

With 5.5 points each were 16-year-old GM Yuriy Kuzubov of Ukraine, GM Baadur Jobava and GM Levan Pantsulaia of Georgia with 5.5 points each.

In other Saturday matches, Paragua faces IM Subbaraman Vijayalakshmi of India, Dimakiling takes on GM Alexander Areshchenko of Ukraine, So battles GM Pawel Jaracz of Poland, Laylo tackles GM Namig Guliyev of Azerbaijan and Nolte meets GM Stefan Djuric of Yugoslavia. *Marlon Bernardino, contributor*

Garcia heads chess team to Jakarta

CONGRESSMAN Prospero "Butch" Pichay stresses a point during the recent International Chess Federation (Fide) Congress in Turin, Italy.

WHIZ KID JAN EMMANUEL GARcia leads the Philippine chess team which left the country yesterday aboard Philippine Airlines to participate in the 7th Asean Age-Group Chess Championships starting tomorrow at the Mercure Convention Center in Jakarta, Indonesia.

"I hope to do well in this event," said the incoming grade six pupil of San Beda College, back-to-back (2005-06) Philippine Age-Group and Palarong Pambansa (elementary) titlist.

In last year's Asean Age-Group championships in Thailand, Garcia bagged the gold medalin blitz and rapid play, and also chipped in a silver medal in the standard individual and team event as the Philippines placed third overall behind Vietnam and Singapore.

Accompanying the players are Grandmaster Rogelio Antonio Jr. International Master Jayson Gonzales and lawyer Florand Garcia.

The team is being supported by National Chess Federation of the Philippines president Rep. Prospero "Butch" Pichay, who gave the players $150 each as pocket money.

The other team members are: (Boy's) Paulo Bersamina (U-8) of Pasay City, Melwyn Kenneth Baltazar (U-10) of Malabon City, Joel Pimentel (U-14) of Bacolod City, John Ranel Morazo (U-16) of Paniqui, Tarlac, Paulo James Florendo (U-18) of Zamboanga City. (Girl's) Samantha Glo Revita (U-8) of Rosales, Pangasinan, Mira Mirano (U-10) of Banga, Aklan, Chardine Cheradee Camacho (U-12) of Caba, La Union, Jedara Docena (U-14) of Antiquiera, Bohol, Kimberly Jane Cunanan (U-16) of Angeles City, and Rulp Ylem Jose (U-18) of Makati City. *NM Marlon Bernardino*

SPORTSWATCH

Agrabio vs Melgarejo in Fistorama

FISTORAMA FEATURES THIS AFTERNOON A 10-ROUND, SUPERFEATHERweight bout between Dodie Boy Agrabio and Aaron Melgarejo. It is supported by a six-round bout in the bantamweight division between Arnel Layson and Jonathan Martos. The fights were recently held in Barangay Bantug, Muñoz Science City, Nueva Ecija. Fistorama is shown worldwide twice weekly through ABS-CBN Global's The Filipino Channel/Pinoy Central TV. "Golf Power Plus," supported by PCSO, Hope and Tanduay, airs at 3 p.m. featuring the elimination match between St. Jude College Team I and PATTS in the PCSO Women's Intercollegiate Beach Volleyball Challenge. Golf Power Plus is likewise aired worldwide through ABS-CBN Global Limited's The Filipino Channel/Pinoy Central TV.

Estrellado tops SJC Int'l Derby

POL ESTRELLADO OF LAGUNA CLINCHED THE SOLO CHAMPIONSHIP OF THE first-ever "SJC 9-Cock International Derby" Friday night at San Juan Coliseum. The event was sponsored by Sagupaan Complexor 3000. Estrellado's PEBL Sta. Cruz I bested a banner field of 90 local and international bets by posting eight wins against one loss. The team of William Go, Max Roxas and Patrick Puno (Paniqui Tarlac Dominator, 7.5 points) missed the title by half a point. Top favorites Patrick Antonio, Gene Batiea of Mississippi and Jun Topacio (JTPA Sagupaan Complexor 3000), settled for runner-up finish with seven points, along with Matt Bitanga (Golden Circle II), Adrian and Rey Manansala (Adrian and Tokwing), Clyde Benebese (CMB Sylvester) and Ronald del Rosario (KC Clarex Swing). Meanwhile, the "Gentlemen Cockers Association of the Philippines (GCAP) 5-cock derby is up next at SJC on June 21. Call 725-5369 and 725-6563 or 0917-8041691 (Ronnie).

Honda Civic awaits Roligon champ

WHO'S THE NEXT LUCKY PARTICIPANT WHO WILL DRIVE HOME A BRAND new Honda Civic? On July 1, 4, 6, 8 and 11, Roligon Mega Cockpit presents another blockbuster cockfest with eye-popping prizes, the Hatawan Sa Tag-Ulan 6-cock derby. The total guaranteed prize is P3.5 million, said promoter Rolly Ligon. The Honda Civic, now on display at Roligon lobby, will be awarded to the participant with the fastest winning time (based on last fight). Entry fee is P8,800. For reservation of cockhouses, contact 851-2275, 833-1638 and 852-9812 (Shirley or Jona).

Murder at the 'Dome

By Hermie Rivera

COMMENTARY

IT'S SELDOM THAT A FIGHTER travels abroad to fight a titleholder in his backyard and comes out a winner'

But former two-time world champion Oscar Larios of Mexico is undaunted as he takes on the ever perilous Manny Pacquiao in a 12-rounder on July 2 at the Araneta Coliseum.

It is a huge leap forward by the brawler fondly called "Chololo" who is coming in as an underdog owing to a loss of his junior featherweight crown to Israel Vasquez.

Pacquiao, who is deep in training at his Hollywood digs, says he is ready for the challenge of the peripatetic Mex, adding that Larios is not yet the fighter who can deter him from elevating his star status further.

Fact is, majority of the experts we've talked to are saying the Gensan mauler is virtually unbeatable against the hard-punching Guadalajara native.

Freddie Roach, Manny's chief handler has taught him everything he needs to know to insure that nothing mars their march toward a megabuck year-ending encounter with Erik Morales— legal suits filed by his own handlers against Pacquiao's advisers—notwithstanding.

Just when details of this promo dubbed mano a mano have been put to order, comes this brazen intrusion which Manny needs like a friggin' hole in the head.

Unbelievable!

From where we sit, it will be a brutal test of skills by two determined fighters out to regale the millions who are looking forward to such a meeting.

Make this one a great fight—nay—a damn good one with sustained action guaranteed to enthrall even the tightwads who are likely to break their banks just to see this fisticuff.

To resist Pacquiao's pressure in the early going is the ultimate headache of anyone including Larios.

Ask El Terrible Erik who was a prey to such woes in their second meeting.

And who was it who sagely wrote that "boxing is the manly art of murder?"

The sensational Pacman owns a knockout record that is the envy of the other practitioners in his weight division.

The last one to succumb to his lethal combos was the prodigious Erik Morales.

But, Larios, to repeat is not an easy out. He is tough as nails and admittedly, a fierce owner of a potent right hand which has long been the bane of left-handed battlers.

Most of Larios' victims (who were iced early in his career) attest to his mind-numbing knockout prowess.

But can the taller Mexican land his sockdolager to score an upset? Or will Super Pacman register a one-sided massacre?

Your call.

CHAMPION: The 1st Mayor Jun Bernabe Cup in Barangay Don Bosco ended with Vatican Tennis Club as champion. From left are G. Loquellano, P. Cudilla, R. Velasquez, I. Aguila, B. Pantino, B. Ranay, A. Villarosa, B. Nograd, V. Valerio, R. Rendon, R. Aguila, M. Manalo, J. Gasacaw and W. Mosquito.

Motocross great Lopez dies

FORMER MOTOCROSS champion Redan Lopez is dead. He was 46. Lopez, the 1978 "Rider of the Year, passed away last Friday in his hometown in San Dionisio, Iloilo. A contemporary of motocross legend Butch Chase, Lopez remained actively involved in sports even after his retirement in motocross.

Aside from organizing regular motocross races in Iloilo, he was also actively supporting chess, basketball and football from 1980 to 1990.

In 1988, he ran and won as No. 2 councilor of San Dionisio, Iloilo. The following election, he finished No. 1 councilor.

He is survived by his wife Evelyn Sumergido and children Rebel Ramon (24), Maricel Margarita (21), Marian Palmira (15), Celia Andrea (10) and Andre Eugenio (9).

His remains lie in state at the San Dionisio Municipal Hall and Later at St. Joseph Church in Jaro, Iloilo.

Interment will be at the Lopez Family Cemetery in Jaro, Iloilo City, on June 17.

DUNCIL: Rising tiger

Duncil ready for UAAP wars

SANTO TOMAS WILL BE PARADING PRACTIcally new faces in the coming UAAP basketball season, ready to end three fruitless campaigns and again be counted as one of the league's elite.

League legend Pido Jarencio will be handling the Growling Tigers for the first time, returning to the place where his storied career started.

After a dominating 1990s which saw the España-based squad win four titles from 1993, the Tigers missed the Final Four the last three years.

Joselito Duncil will be one of the figures that Santo Tomas hopes would be able to help the Tigers reach the semifinals at the very least.

The 6-foot-1 Duncil, after averaging 14 points, 3 rebounds and 2 assists last year, is one of the veterans in Jarencio's squad and could be the leader of this young team when the 69th UAAP season opens July 8.

Duncil will be coming off an experience-enriching stint with the Teletech Titans in the on-going PBL Unity Cup, where he had his moments of brilliance.

"My stint with Teletech made me a better player as I played against veterans," said Duncil, the youngest in a brood of seven, who is fondly called "JoDun."

"With coach Jarencio, we are optimistic we will do better this year," he added.

Burlington Industries Inc., incidentally, has made Duncil an endorser of its Biofresh socks, which has the technology to eliminate odor coming from an athlete's overworked feet.

The new technology eliminates bacteria and microorganisms that cause feet odor.

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Editor **Teddyvic S. Melendres**

Ramirez gets full backing of PSC board

RAMIREZ

THE PHILIPPINE Sports Commission Executive board made up of the agency's middle management personnel yesterday issued a manifesto expressing full support for chair Butch Ramirez.

Drafted by PSC's acting executive director Cesar Pradas, the manifesto vouched for Ramirez's "competence and dedication" in leading the agency's mandate to take care of sports development and the athletes' welfare.

Pradas and executive assistant Joy Encabo said they did the gesture in the wake of "intrigues" thrown at Ramirez, who is now in Europe on an invitation of world sports officials, particularly the Fifa (international football federation) which is now staging the World Cup in Munich, Germany.

"We want everybody to know that all department heads of the PSC are in total support of the chair and we represent all 400 employees of the agency," said Pradas.

He added that he has not heard of any complaints against Ramirez during their weekly meetings with the representatives of the chair and the four commissioners.

Sports legends Mona Sulaiman of track and field and Ed Pacheco of football have reportedly supported top-level changes in the PSC though both refused to issue statements to the media.

Sources said two commissioners are on their way out with Bacolod sports media practitioner and Bacolod Southeast Asian Games Organizing Committee official Eric Loretiza and swimming legend Akiko Thomson being groomed to replace them.

The present board is composed of Ramirez, commissioners Joey Mundo and Richie Garcia, and Leon Montemayor and Ambrosio de Luna, who are holdovers from the administration of former PSC chief Eric Buhain. *Marc Anthony Reyes*

WASHINGTON Nationals' Marlon Byrd (25) slides home to score the game-winning run as Philadelphia Phillies catcher Sal Fasano waits for the ball. The Nationals won 9-8. AP

Del Rosario, Tee up in ladies all-events

By Marc Anthony Reyes

LIZA DEL ROSARIO, THE 2004 ASIAN Grand Slam champion, dished out a smashing performance Friday night to storm ahead in the ladies' Open all-events of the 35th PBC-Boysen International Open tenpin bowling championships at the Green Valley Lanes.

The 28-year-old Del Rosario, who in 2003 swept all four major events of this tourney, dislodged erstwhile leader Liza Clutario with 1747 total pinfalls.

Del Rosario posted 868 in singles, 415 in doubles and 464 in trios to lead Clutario, whose 1726 enabled her to stay in second place. Sheena Go was third with 1696.

Southeast Asian Games Masters champ Markwin Tee occupied top spot in the men's side with 1833 after scoring 919 in singles, 484 in doubles and 430 in trios. Biboy Rivera (1810) was second and Gene Tonolete (1787) held third.

Clutario, the SEAG Masters winner, nevertheless held on to the lead in the Masters qualifying with her 234.5 average. Asia's No. 13-ranked ladies' player rolled a four-game series of 219-207-233-279.

Irene Benitez, the 2004 ABF Philippine leg champion, stood second with a 223 average on lines of 225-207-225-235, followed by last year's ABF Philippine leg winner Apple Posadas, who had a 246-209-212-224 series for a 222.75 average.

Tyrone Ongpauco leads the men's Masters qualifying with a 246.5 average on lines of 252-224-223-287. The ABF Tour Singapore leg champ led 17-year-old Diego Candano, who held second place with a 245.25 average.

Candano, who is creating a stir in this tournament for his strong performance against the crack field, rolled 246-268-225-242 to stay ahead of Tee whose 236-257-250-233 allowed him to keep third place with a 244 average.

Overnight leader Biboy Rivera slid to fifth place (242.75) behind Kerwin Law (243.75), followed by Raoul Miranda (241.25), Takahiro Yoshida (241), Richie Poblete (240) and 2002 World Cup champ CJ Suarez (235.5).

Meanwhile, the foreign players started their campaign shortly after their arrival Saturday. The Koreans got going Saturday night, while the Hong Kong and Thai bets were scheduled to play yesterday. The Malaysians are expected Tuesday.

Orcollo rips ex-US Open titlist Deuel

DENNIS "SURIGAO" ORCOLLO trounced former US Open champion Corey Deuel, 9-5, yesterday to remain in the winner's bracket of the 2006 Reno Open at the Sands Regency Hotel in Reno, Nevada.

The 27-year-old Orcollo, who hails from Bislig, Surigao del Sur, will face Tom Seymour in the next round. Seymour earlier beat Loren Mah, 9-6.

Three other Filipinos, Warren Kiamco, San Francisco-based Edwin Montal and Canada-based Deomark Alpajora, also stayed unbeaten.

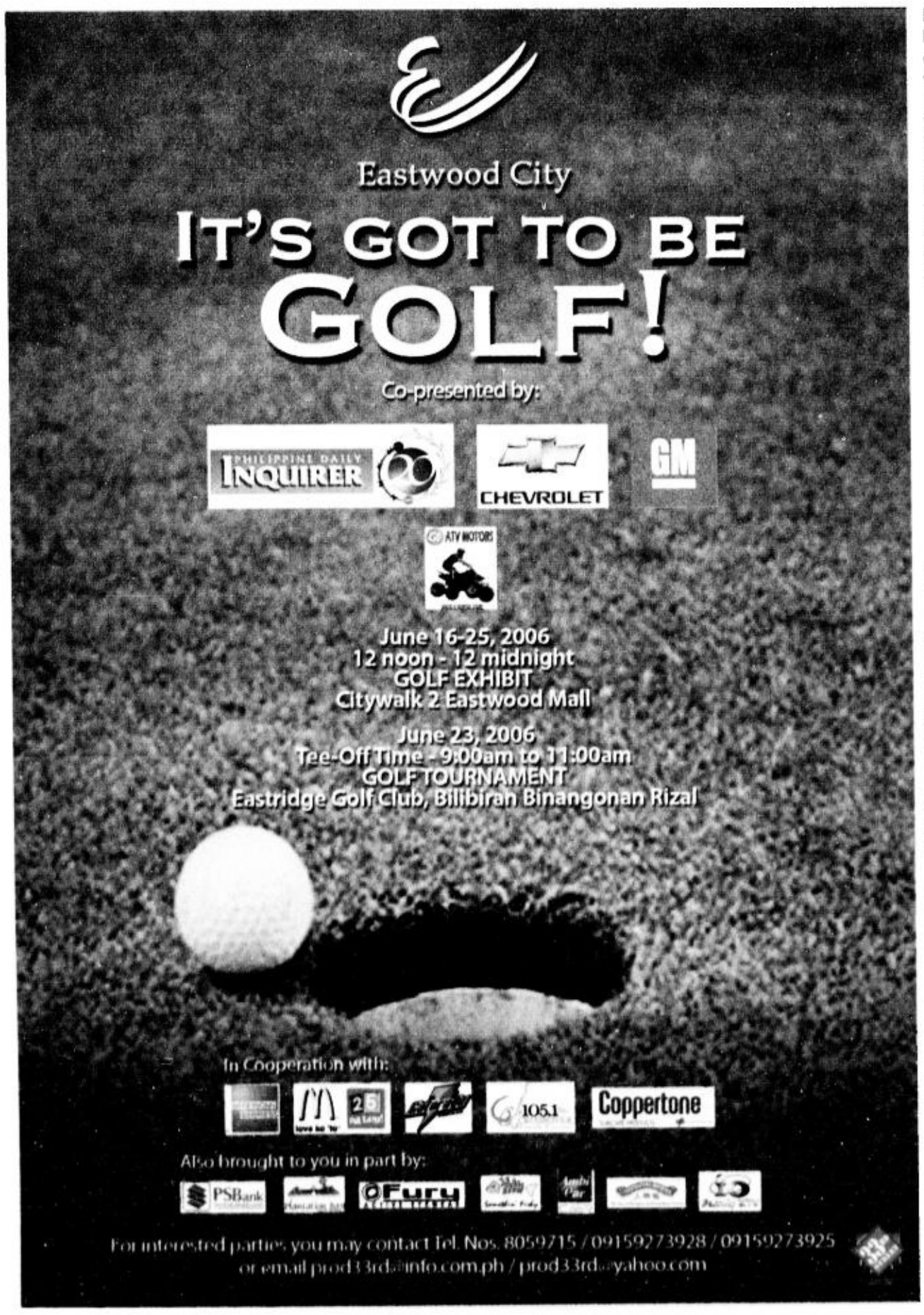
The Cebuano cue master Kiamco nipped Jimmy Wetch, 9-3, Alpajora outclassed Nick Cano, 9-1, and Montal outwitted Rodney "Rockets" Morris, 9-2.

Kiamco is scheduled to face Paul Juarez in the next round. Alpajora takes on Robb Saez and Montal will test the mettle of David Reljic.

But Gandy Valle, the 1998 Asian Games gold medalist from Davao City, bowed to Tim Hall, 4-9, and was relegated to the loser's bracket along with US-based Jose "Amang" Parica, who lost to Kim Davenport, 9-4.

Valle had earlier clinched one of the two slots in the qualifying round of the International Pool Tour (IPT), which has a prize fund of $8 million, last June 4, in Seattle.

He joined Orcollo, Kiamco and Rodolfo "Boy Samson" Luat in the grand finals along with outright seeds Efren "Bata" Reyes, Francisco "Django" Bustamante and Marlon "Marvelous" Manalo. *Marlon Bernardino*



BIREL drivers Marlon Stockinger (10) and Ivan Carapiet (14) led the pack in yesterday's three qualifying heats as they occupy the top two grid positions in today's pre-final race of the Asian Karting Open Championship at the Carmona Circuit Philippines.

Stockinger takes kart pole

CARMONA, CAVITE—THE PHILIPPINES' Marlon Stockinger of Birel Motorsports took pole position and Filipinos occupied the next four slots on the grid in today's pre-final race of the prestigious 2006 Asian Karting Open Championship's second leg at the Carmona Circuit here.

Stockinger, the Rotax Max champion in the kickoff leg in Malaysia, put himself in position for a second straight victory after sweeping all three qualifying heats.

He was consistent throughout, pulling away with the fastest lap time of 44.494 seconds to win the pole with a wide margin over teammate Ivan Carapiet.

Carapiet had a runner-up finish in the first two qualifying heats before finishing third in the last race of the event sanctioned by the Automobile Association Philippines (AAP) and sponsored by Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp., Denso Iridium Power, Palmer Asia Inc., Yokohama, Vivere Suites, Department of Finance, Philippine Sports Commission and the Department of Tourism.

Last year's champion Matteo Guidicelli of Alessandra Racing was No. 3 after finishing third in the first race, fourth in the second and a close second in the final heat, where he checked in just 0.884 seconds behind Stockinger.

Alessandra Madrigal, Guidicelli's teammate, will start on No. 4 while Paolo Eslao of Ready to Race Team will be taking off from fifth spot.

The top foreign karter Johnny Afonso of Macau is somewhere at the back and may probably start 11th or 12th.

But Asian Karting queen Michele Bumgarner of M&M Racing had a really bad day.

She ended fourth in Heat 1, third in Heat 2 and a broken throttle cord forced her out of the last qualifying heat.

Valle gets IPT card in Washington

ASIAN GAMES GOLD MEDALIST GANDY "SAPsal" Valle of the Philippines beat Canadian Braddy Gollan, 10-5, to nail the last slot of the International Pool Tour (IPT) 8-ball shoot-out held recently in Washington, Seattle, USA.

After taking a bye in the first round, Valle, playing under the stable of businessman Perry Mariano, beat John Doherty (10-6), Danny Medina (10-6) and Glenn Atwell (10-2), respectively, to face fellow unbeaten player American Michael Divas in the first slot of ITP card.

Valle is also the 2005 SMB Asian 9-ball tour Singapore leg champion, trouncing reigning world 9-ball champion Wu Chia-Ching of Chinese Taipei, 11-9, in the finals. *Marlon Bernardino*

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Emmie G. Velarde
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Mr. C, 'Idol' judge: Tough job

RYAN Cayabyab, right, with fellow judges Pilita Corrales and FrancisM. He says their first day with the aspirants was filled with pleadings and weepings. The second was marked by "intense reactions" that gave him a sleepless night. PHOTOS BY RODEL ROTONI

By Marinel R. Cruz

RYAN CAYABYAB, on his first close encounter with "Philippine Idol" aspirants on Thursday, June 8 (sent as a text message to friends):

"First day at 'Philipine Idol' auditions done. I thought I was tough enough. No. Got so emotionally drained having to say no to all the pleading, pleading and crying, crying. *Hay, naku.* This is not fun anymore. Torture! *Ha-ha-ha.* But wait, *sobrang daming magagaling*! Our country is truly blessed. And so am I, to see such enormous talent parading in front of me. *Nahirapan kami* to let go of the less talented—who were talents, nonetheless. Today (June 9) is another day of pleading and crying. And feeling blessed. Tough job."

***

•Ryan Agoncillo was announced the lone host of "Philippine Idol."

•The mother of an aspirant was rushed to the hospital when her daughter failed the audition.

•Two contestants had fever on Thursday, so they were instructed by judges Ryan Cayabyab, Pilita Corales and Francis Magalona to come back the next day. Both were sent through to the next round.

•A grandson of comedy king Dolphy, a former Star Records artist, and two finalists on "Star in a Million"—a talent search on Channel 2—all brought home highly coveted Golden Tickets on Friday.

These were just some of the scenes at the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC) in Pasay City during the judging for the first season of the reality talent search on ABC 5.

At the time of INQUIRER Entertainment's visit, more than 60 Golden Tickets were handed out, exceeding the allotted 50 for Luzon. Twenty-five contestants are expected from the Visayas and 25 more from Mindanao, said Perci Intalan, head of Creative and Entertainment Production.

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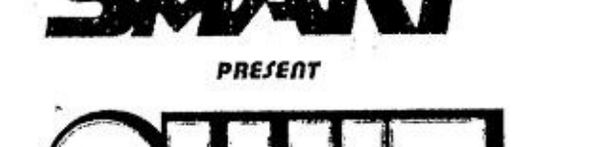

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June 13 (Tuesday)	Southmall 11:00 a.m. Sucat 1:00 p.m. Bicutan 3:00
June 14 (Wednesday)	Mall of Asia 11:00 p.m.
June 15 (Thursday)	Bacoor 11:00 a.m. Dasmariñas 1:00 p.m. Molino 3:00 p.m. Sta. Rosa 5:00 p.m.
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XMEN III
ALL ABOUT LOVE

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MANAY PO
CHAOS

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XMEN III
ALL ABOUT LOVE
SENTINEL
MANAY PO

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MANAY PO
ALL ABOUT LOVE
CARS
XMEN III

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CARS
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GALLERIA 632-9116

1 THE DA VINCI CODE • THX
12:30 3:40 6:50 10:00

2 CARS
11:40 2:15 4:50 7:25 10:00

3 THE INSIDE MAN
11:20 2:00 4:40 7:20 10:00

4 TAKE THE LEAD
11:40 2:15 4:50 7:25 10:00

5 THE OMEN
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

6 CHAOS
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

7 X-MEN 3
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

8 ALL ABOUT LOVE
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

9 MANAY PO
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

10 THE BENCHWARMERS
1:00 3:10 5:20 7:30 9:40

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 THE OMEN
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

2 MANAY PO
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

3 THE INSIDE MAN
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

4 ALL ABOUT LOVE
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

5 TAKE THE LEAD
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

6 CARS

7 X-MEN 3
11:00 1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50

METRO EAST 682-8193 • 682-8199

1 THE INSIDE MAN
1:10 3:40 6:15 9:00

2 CARS
1:00 3:40 6:20 9:00

3 TAKE THE LEAD
12:50 3:35 6:20 9:05

4 THE DA VINCI CODE
12:00 3:00 6:00 9:00

5 MANAY PO
11:25 1:50 4:15 6:40 9:05

6 THE OMEN
11:05 1:35 4:05 6:35 9:05

7 X-MEN 3
11:40 2:00 4:20 6:40 9:10

8 ALL ABOUT LOVE
11:30 1:55 4:25 6:55 9:15

NOVALICHES 936-3231 / 936-3229-30

1 THE DA VINCI CODE
2 ALL ABOUT LOVE
3 X-MEN 3
4 CARS
5 MANAY PO
6 THE OMEN

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1 ALL ABOUT LOVE
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3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE

1 THE INSIDE MAN
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3 TAKE THE LEAD
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6 OVER THE HEDGE

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CHEER FACTOR

FELINE stars on TV

Claws ... out!

LOS ANGELES — The fur really could fly on TV's latest reality entry: It stars cats.

Ten felines, picked from animal shelters nationwide, will live in a New York house to vie—a la "Big Brother" or "Survivor"—for a grand prize, in this instance an executive-level job with Meow Mix cat food.

"This thing is very tongue-in-cheek," Ira Cohen, the company's director of advertising and marketing, said Thursday.

The project will be shown in three-minute segments in the 9 p.m. EDT hour Friday on the Animal Planet channel for 10 consecutive weeks, starting June 16. It had yet to be decided if the segments from the Webcam-equipped "Meow Mix House" on Madison Avenue will air at the same time each night.

For homes

The spots, which Cohen said he preferred to call "a program within a program" rather than commercials, are intended as an eye-catching marketing tool for Meow Mix. But they're also aimed at increasing awareness of the importance of pet adoptions, Cohen said.

June represents a key adoption period for kittens born in the spring. There also is an ongoing need for homes for older cats, he said.

The Meow Mix House cats, from shelters or rescue groups such as the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in New York, Touched by an Animal in Chicago and Kitten Rescue in Los Angeles, will themselves be gaining new homes.

Best purr

As the cats are put through their weekly paces in contests including best purr and top post-climber, a panel of judges will decide who stays and who goes. When a cat is voted out, it will move to a permanent home and get a year's supply of Meow Mix as a consolation prize.

Two winners will be chosen, one by judges and one by viewers in online voting,. Cohen said. The judges' choice will get a new family and the title of Meow Mix's "feline vice president of research and development," the company said.

Another corporate position, as yet unspecified, will go to the cat voted most popular.

In voice-overs accompanying the kitty action, the cats will be given personalities as crafted by advertising copywriters. Some may be shy, but the Los Angeles and New York cats could turn out to be real glamour pusses, Cohen said. *AP*

MEGA and MYX VJs Heart Evangelista, Iya Villania, Karel MarquezLuis Manzano (partly hidden), Nikki Gil and Geoff Eigenmann

CHRISTIAN Bautista and Favorite Female Rachelle Ann Go

FAVORITE Male Artist Erik Santos

MYMP: Favorite Ring Tone?

SHARON Cuneta: First Magna Award winner

MYX and match

ROCK BANDS RULED AT THE FIRST-ever MYX Music Awards, held at Onstage in Greenbelt Makati on Tuesday.

Leading the pack was Cueshé, which romped away with Favorite Song (for "Stay"), Artist and Group.

Rivermaya topped two categories—Music Video and Media Soundtrack, both for "You'll Be Safe Here," theme song of the ABS-CBN series "Spirits," directed by Chito Roño.

If there's a *Kapamilya* vibe in this awards show, it's because MYX is the music video channel of ABS-CBN.

Other *Kapamilya* winners were "ASAP" performers Rachelle Ann Go and Erik Santos, who won Favorite Female and Male Artists, respectively, and fellow champion Mark Bautista, who won Favorite Remake for "I Need You."

Still, it wasn't a purely *Kapamilya* affair, with GMA-7's Yasmien Kurdi bringing home the New Artist honors.

Megastar Sharon Cuneta received the first MYX Magna Award—a lifetime achievement honor.

"I was so grateful that a music authority like MYX chose me as their first-ever Magna awardee," Cuneta told INQUIRER Entertainment. "It was also a thrill that a whole new generation of fans were being introduced to my music and that my entire 30-year music career was cited."

Christopher de Leon, Jaya, Nyoy Volante, Top Suzara, Nikki Gil and Kurdi serenaded Cuneta with a medley of her songs.

Other winners: Sandwich, Indie Artist; Sponge Cola's "KLSP," Rock Video; Gloc 9's "Tula," Urban Video; Rachelle Ann Go's "From the Start," Mellow Video; Christian Bautista and Nina's "Burn," Collaboration; MYMP, Live Performance; and Pussycat Dolls' "Don't Cha," International Music Video.

A few awards sounded strange—Favorite Ringtone (MYMP's "Tell Me Where It Hurts")

JAY Justiniani of Cueshé

Champs and rock bands reign supreme in the video awards

LOVI Poe

and Guest Appearance in a Music Video (Anne Curtis in Mark Bautista's "I Need You").

Presenters were led by Ryan Cayabyab, Pops Fernandez, Precious Lara Quigaman, Eula Valdez, Jett Pangan, Keanna Reeves and Budoy.

The event was hosted by MYX veejays Luis Manzano, Heart Evangelista, Iya Villania, Karel Marquez, Geoff Eigenmann and Nikki Gil.

Bayani San Diego Jr.

EVERYONE gave it their all, but only 40 of over 150 fast-track picks got the chance to face the main judges on Thursday and Friday.

Mr. C, 'Idol' judge: Tough job

PILITA CORRALES: Expressive

FRANCISM: Inscrutable

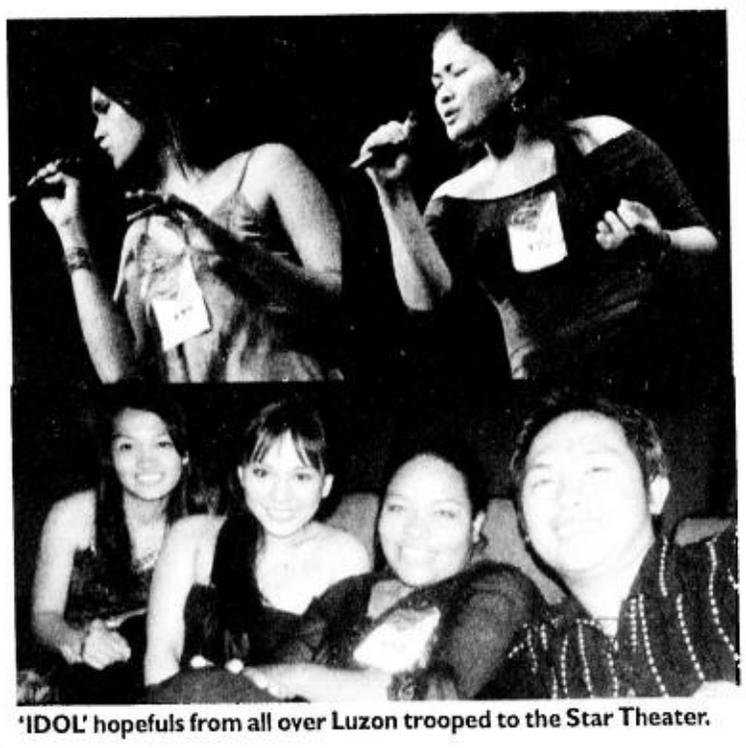
From page A2-1

Cayabyab told INQUIRER on the second day: "I blew my top for the nth time. There were less people pleading, but more intense reactions. Wow! Suddenly a lot of people hate me. Is this journey worth it? I will sleep tonight with a heavy heart again, having prevented many dreams from being fulfilled. For the majority, this is not a ticket to fame but a passport to a better life. It is difficult to endure the despair I see in their eyes. I hope the 'Philippine Idol' who emerges will be a hero. Not just an idol, but a hero."

Bearers of Golden Tickets will take part in the elimination round on Aug. 1 at the CCP Main Theater, where 24 finalists will be picked, said program producer Emily Carlos Roque.

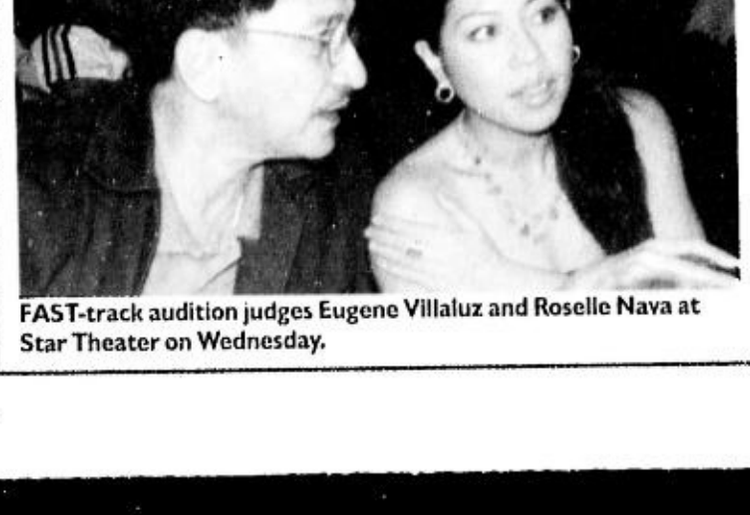
"We're bringing in all the technical requirements to the CCP. We have to be at par with 'Al' standards," Roque said.

On June 7, 40 contestants from Luzon were chosen during fast-track eliminations at the Star Theater in Pasay City. Luzon fast-track screenings were organized by Manila Broadcasting Corp., media partner of ABC 5. For Visayas and Mindanao, screenings will be facilitated by Radio Mindanao Network.



'IDOL' hopefuls from all over Luzon trooped to the Star Theater.

HOST Ryan Agoncillo consoles one who didn't make it.



FAST-track audition judges Eugene Villaluz and Roselle Nava at Star Theater on Wednesday.

ROUNDUP

Historic telecast

A historic telecast airs on June 12 as ABS-CBN and ABS-CBN Global invite all Filipinos here and abroad to mark the Philippine Independence Day—a first in local TV viewing experience.

Throughout the day, Filipinos will witness the raising of the flag in various cities around the world on Channel 2 and The Filipino Channel, a 24-hour cable and satellite service available globally.

Each flag ceremony—in Manila, LA, San Francisco, New York, Milan, Dubai, London, Sydney, Jeddah, Abu Dhabi and other key cities) will be led by prominent figures, including Manny Pacquiao and the Everest Expedition Team.

Dream telecast

Dream Satellite TV brings world-class entertainment to local sports fanatics with its live telecast of the 2006 Fifa World Cup in Germany, tauted as the "most spectacular sporting event" on the planet.

The telecast started on June 9 and continues until tomorrow. With all-digital direct-to-home TV broadcasting service via satellite, Dream carries pay-per-view channels for the 64 live World Cup matches as they happen, and as the drama unfolds in the 12 German cities hosting 32 international football teams.

Russian festival

The Cultural Center of the Philippines, Friendship Society Philippines Russia, Inc. and Embassy of the Russian Federation mark the 30th anniversary of RP-Russia diplomatic relations with the "Russian Cultural Festival," June 14-18, at the CCP.

One of the featured groups is New Names of Moscow, led by Viacheslav Kruglov, People's Artist of Russia and professor of Moscow State Academy of Music.

The group has performed in concerts in Moscow, including the Kremlin, and at Unesco events.

Best Inspirational

"Pieta (Oyayi sa Paanan ni Hesus)" was declared Best Inspirational/Religious Single at the recently concluded pre-awarding ceremony of the Awit Awards.

"Pieta" was produced by Julius Geuvara and composed by Paulo K. Tirol, with lyrics by Michelle Joy Francia. It was performed by Hangad, a group of young professionals bound by their aim of helping others know God through music.

Over the last 15 years, the group has recorded four albums and produced three music videos under the Jesuit Music Ministry.

A 'Tolits' day

Bright Child Junior Ambassador of Goodwill BJ "Tolits" Forbes recently spent an afternoon with the children of the Virlanie Foundation to teach them some dance steps from his "Tolits" album.

The event is a yearly summer outreach program of 3M Philippines. Volunteers set aside four weekends to teach sports skills and values to the Virlanie wards.

Moonrise fest deadline

The Center for Environmental Awareness and Education and Ford Conservation and Environmental Grants are inviting all professional filmmakers, first-time filmmakers, teachers and students to submit their documentary-entries to the Moonrise Film Festival by 5 p.m. on June 30.

Moonrise is an annual environmental and cultural film competition launched to increase environmental awareness and promote critical thinking.

Organizers said, "Anything in and about the Philippines—from garbage to underwater life, from forests to historical sites, has the potential to make a good story." Submission forms and festival mechanics are available at www.moonrisefeilfest.com. Or call 721-7360.

Peer-to-peer music

LONDON—EMI Group has announced that it would make its music catalog available to the first advertising supported peer-to-peer service as the entertainment industry embraces the same technology that once nearly crippled it.

The new service called Qtrax, developed by New York-based LTDnetwork and slated for launch later this year, will give consumers the ability to download music for free after watching ads, or the option of paying for a premium subscription version.

Financial terms of the deal with London-based EMI, home to Coldplay and Robbie Williams, were not disclosed, although EMI, which is the first of the music majors to sign up, will share in both the advertising and song sales revenue.

Peer-to-peer services, which allow users to download music, films and TV programmes from other users who have the desired files instead of a central server, stunned record companies in 1998 as teenagers started building massive music collections by swapping songs for free online with services such as Napster and Grokster, rather than paying for CDs.

Music companies and film studios have been slowly warming to P2P services, however, as they overcome their bitterness and fears, in a bid to harness file-sharing networks so users pay for copyrighted songs.

Reuters

Top, Barbie, carry on

SPIN CITY

Two artists sing their hearts out, surrounded by friends

By Pocholo Concepcion
Contributor

TOP SUZARA SHOULD BE thankful for the conflicts that forced him to quit his former band Freestyle. Now he has his own self-produced album, "Carry On" (Universal), recorded with a couple of musician friends who believe he deserves the break.

The result is 15 tracks of pensive pop-rock soliloquy, in which Suzara contemplates the value of relationships including, in a few suggestive lines, his feelings on walking away from former band mates.

Suzara is not only gifted with a full, booming baritone; he also plays acoustic/electric guitar and keyboards— skills he confidently applies to every song. Backed up by friends Rommel de la Cruz on bass and studio owner Boyet Aquino on drums, Suzara sounds like he relished every word and sound that went into the music.

Most of the songs are sad or brooding, even when they talk about love and the joy it brings. Is it an indication of Suzara's state of mind at the time he was recording the album?

In a recent interview, he told us how painful it was to have lost his old band and that for a while he didn't want to do anything with music.

But this guy can hack it even if, at some points in the album, the songs sound no different from other commercial stuff on radio. Still, as a solo effort it deserves an A, especially the lasting impressions his vocals leave.

There are several tracks that may charm the cynical, but "Overcast" shines above the rest. It is an upbeat take on how cloudy weather can lift one's mood from bad to glad.

Lines from some of the tracks—"It Ain't Easy," for instance—pierce the heart: "And the hardest part in lovin' someone you really, really love/Is lovin' them by letting go..."

Perhaps the best thing Suzara did with "Carry On" is play his heart out while surrounded by friends who likewise deliver the goods. Watch out for some wonderful blues-y slide guitar and church-organ harmonies Suzara himself performed, not to mention a few great adlibs by guest guitarist Noel Mendez.

Sounds like ...

Meanwhile, listening to Barbie Almalbis gives us the uncanny feeling that it's got to be Edie Brickell—by virtue of phrasing and intonation—cooing into our ears.

That's not to denigrate the efforts of a beauty-and-brains type of musician like Almalbis, who goes solo in her latest CD, "Paradise" (12 Stone Records). It's just a bit creepy that she does sound like Brickell, an American singer-songwriter whose promising career was temporarily put on hold when she married Paul Simon and raised their three children.

Almalbis herself is said to be in love with a son of Gringo Honasan, and we wonder if that could be the cause of the blissful vibrations in "Paradise."

This album could send the listener into fits of euphoria, on account of the soft, cherubic cooing vocal style that Almalbis seems to have perfected in the course of a career that began in the mid-1990s and covered two separate bands (whose members still wound up playing as session musicians in this supposedly solo work).

Almalbis is still capable of portraying wide-eyed innocence, like nursing a crush (*"Alam ko na'ng pangalan mo/Pati* address *at telepono..."*), or falling in love for the first time with hesitation ("I love you but can you wait...").

But this is no cutesy pop stuff, since Almalbis' acknowledges having been turned on as a kid by badass bands like Guns n Roses. Yet neither does "Paradise" burn with crunchy hard rock, although there are tracks that warm the body with spirited interplay between musicians led by Jack Rufo—former Club Dredd prodigy and currently hot record producer.

A few songs are noteworthy for their use of imagery ("Little Miss Spider," "For the World"). But there are also traces of ambiguity and awkwardness with language—weaknesses that don't really matter so long as the hooks and melodies connect.

And as far as connection is concerned, it's easy to pinpoint which tracks the first-time listener would easily remember in "Paradise." These include a duet with the Fil-Am band Speaks ("High"), an Eraserheads cover ("Overdive") and that shampoo commercial soundtrack ("Summer Day").

Not to mean that Almalbis lacks the prowess to write great tunes. Let's just say that maybe she really needs to fall madly in love by now.

Welcome Froi

Welcom Froi, formerly of the boy band Jeremiah, into the fold of new solo artists. Soon to be released is his first four-track release, simply titled "Froi." Carrier single is "Sabihin Mo," and the other three numbers arer "Bathala," "Kaibigan" and an acoustic version of "Sabihin Mo."

sessiOn Road

Also out in the market soon is the new album of the group sessiOnRoad, with all-original songs written by its five members—Hannah (vocals, guitar), Chavi (drums), JV (percussion, back-vocals), Coy (lead guitar) and Richard (bass). Meanwhile, the group performs at Tavern on the Square, Greenbelt 3, on June 21 and 28.

TOP Suzara

BARBIE Almalbis

SESSION Road

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Exciting dance finals coming up

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

THE RECENTLY CONCLUDED MONTHLY competition for ABC 5's "Shall We Dance" program was instructive to us in several ways:

First, celebrities who compete in the dance contest should be good dancers to begin with.

They can't hope to learn the basics of advanced moves of competitive ballroom dancing in only four weeks' time. And they shouldn't expect to win on sheer celebrity brio, panache and drop-dead looks alone.

This lesson presented itself in a particularly striking way two weeks ago, when **Melanie Marquez** was voted out of the tilt. Prior to that, she had won points with both jurors and viewers with her idiosyncratic, "emote *na* emote" way of "selling" her dance numbers.

Two weeks ago, however, her lack of real dancing prowess caught up with her. Despite her "show-stopping" performance, replete with sultry looks, dramatic emotional flourishes and theatrical gestures, she couldn't reach the level of the other celebrity finalists for the month, **Desiree del Valle** and **Joshua Zamora.**

And that was as it should have been. The show is titled "Shall We Dance," not "Shall We Emote," after all!

A second lesson we've learned from watching the show for some months is that the local ballroom dancing scene has some very strong and vivid female performers, but some of its male dancers are on the swishy side, and that compromises the quality and strength of the numbers they perform.

Clearly, this problem has to be addressed, if ballroom dancing expects to be taken more seriously here. It's cool for male dancers to be gay, but they shouldn't swish when they perform—that's the bottom line.

Finally, we've learned that, while our dancers really work hard at their routines, some of them are limited on point of real originality and individual interpretation.

Compare some of them to the dancing dervishes on US shows like "Dance Fever," and the disparity is clear.

This is not to disparage our dancers, simply to point out that much more can be done by our dancers if they really want to be internationally competitive.

Last Sunday, the show's monthly finals came to a head, with **Desiree** and **Joshua** and their respective partners fighting it out for the top slot.

Celebs who compete in these tilts should be good dancers to begin with

MELANIE Marquez: "Emote *na* emote."

Desiree was a delight to watch as she complemented her lovely looks and great figure with a sizzling dance style that heated up the studio.

But Joshua held his own with his own unique macho mastery of the dance floor, and he and his dance partner, Janeth, proved to be the more eye-catching pair.

At show's end, however, the votes submitted by the jurors and the studio audience favored Desiree and her partner, Dennis.

Not to worry, though: The show has a "wild card" alternative for non-winners, and we believe that Joshua and Judith have a good chance of joining the grand finals of joining the grand finals of "Shall We Dance" via that option.

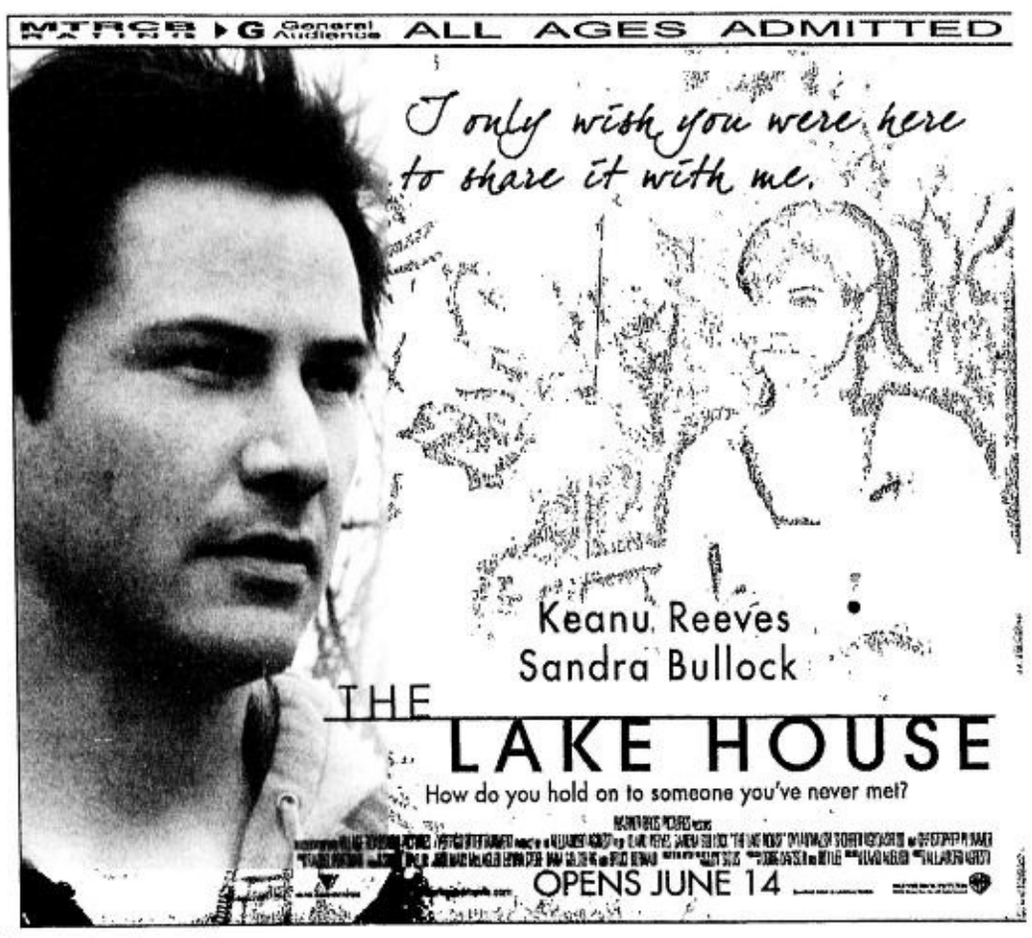
So, the grand finals are shaping up as an exciting showdown between monthly finalists **Mystica** and **Miguel**, **Tirso Cruz III** and **Mia**, **Desiree** and **Dennis**, and possibly Joshua and Janeth. Who will emerge as grand champions of the celebrity dance challenge?

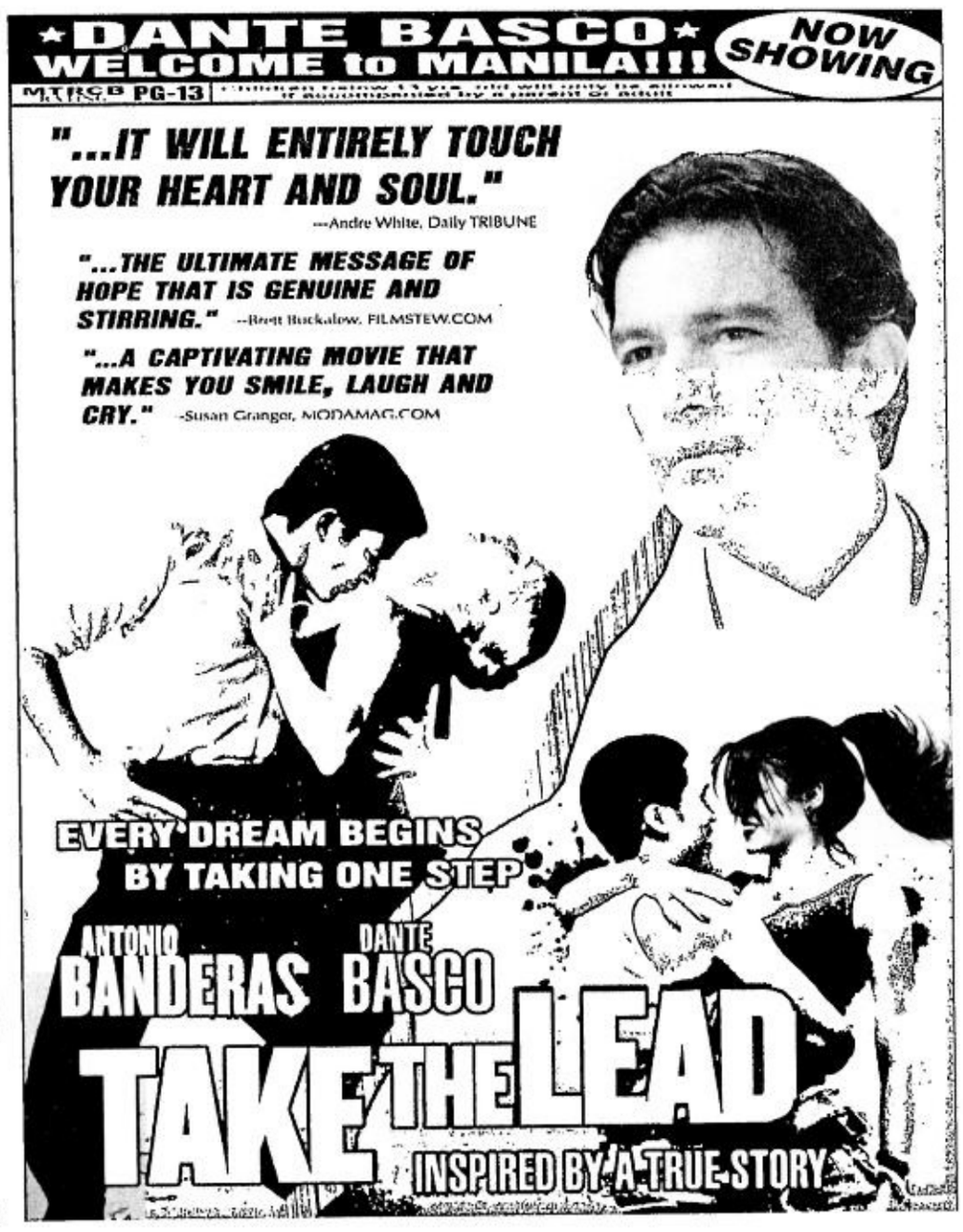
On June 25, we'll find out.

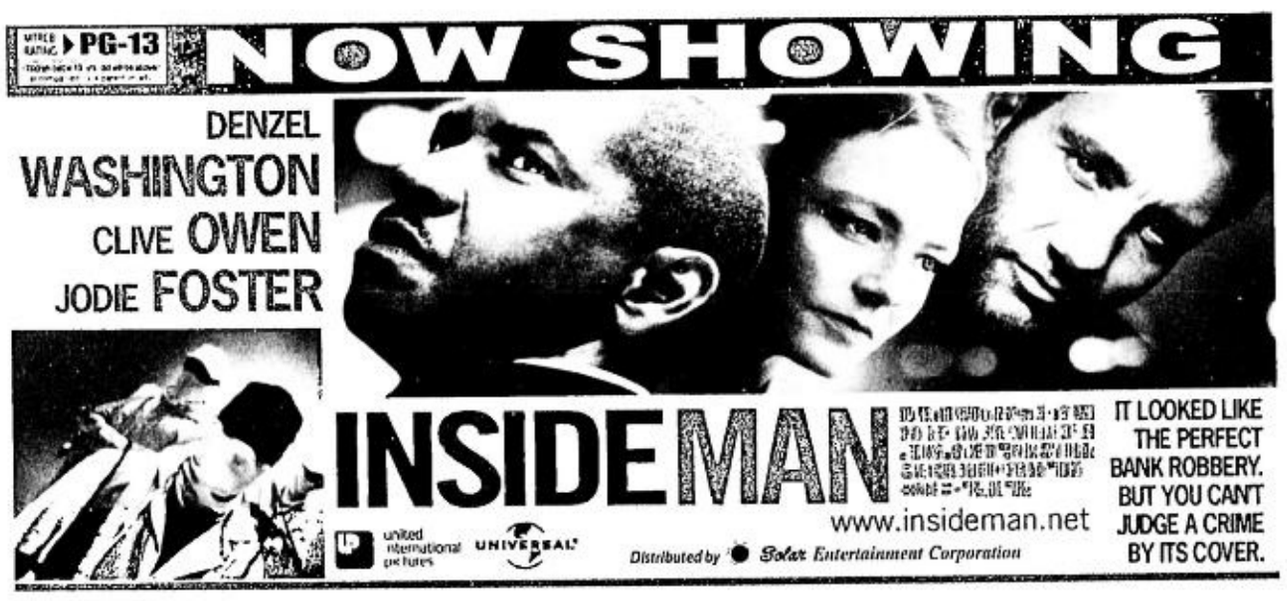
MTV Youth Fair

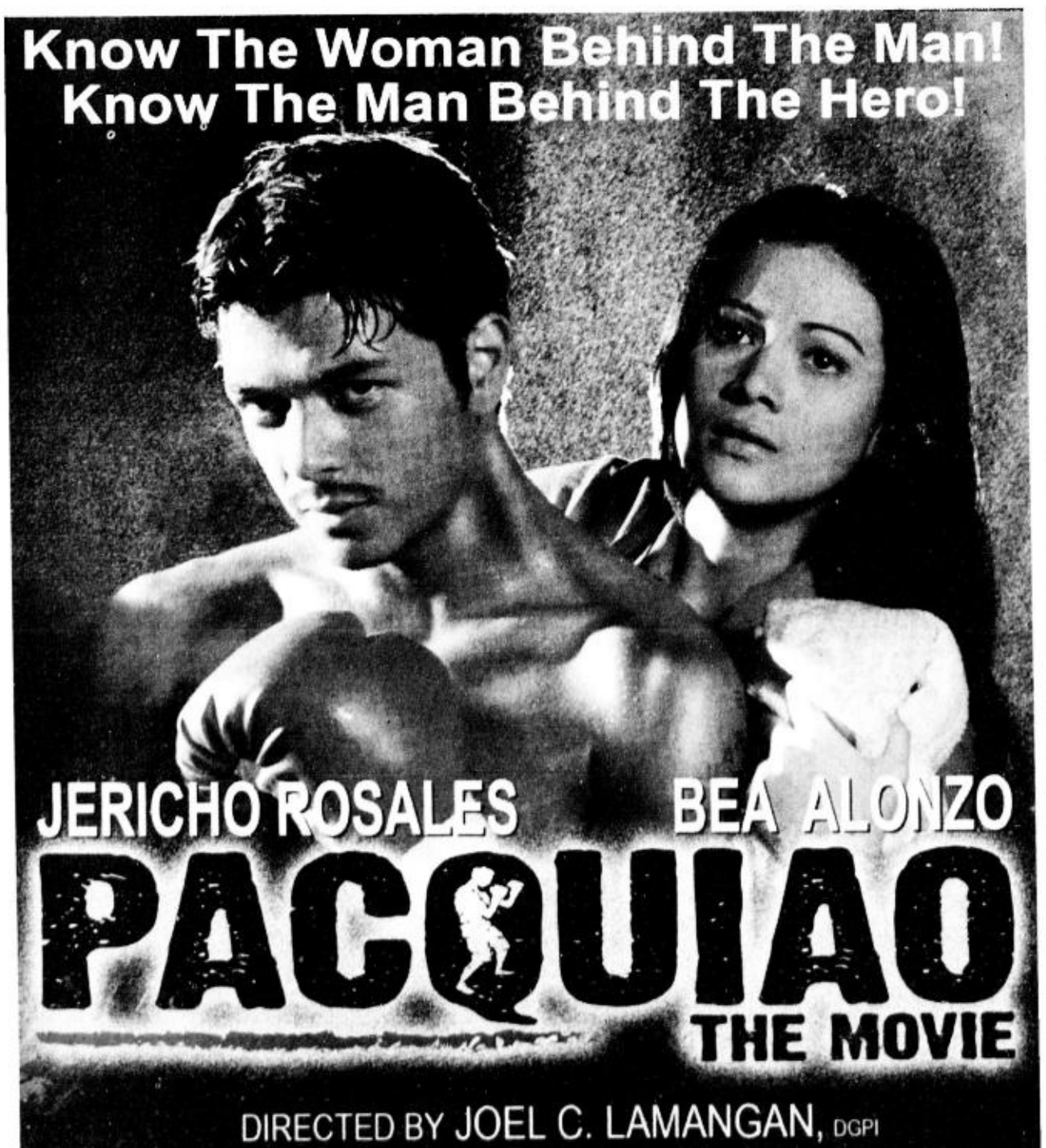
EXPERIENCE the electric world of the MTV Youth Fair, where music, gadgets and gamin' come together at the Rockwell Tent in Makati, on June 11 and 12.

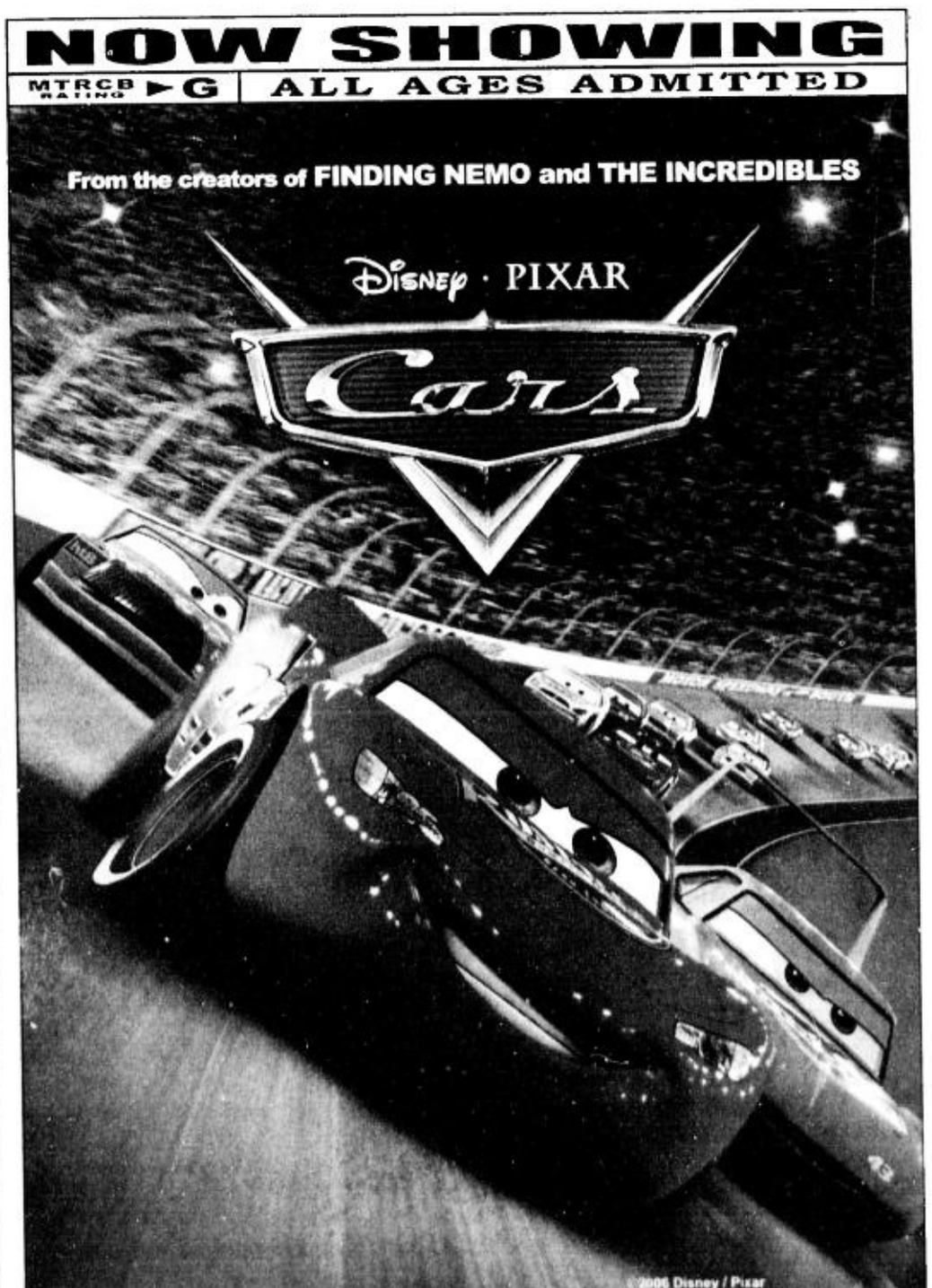
Join VJs **KC Montero**, **Cindy Kurleto** and **Marc Abaya** as they show off different zones of the digital lifestyle, and rock to amplified performances by hot bands like Dicta License, Dharma Down, Itchyworms, 6Cyclemind, Pedicab, Kjwan, Sheila and the Insects and Parokya ni Edgar.











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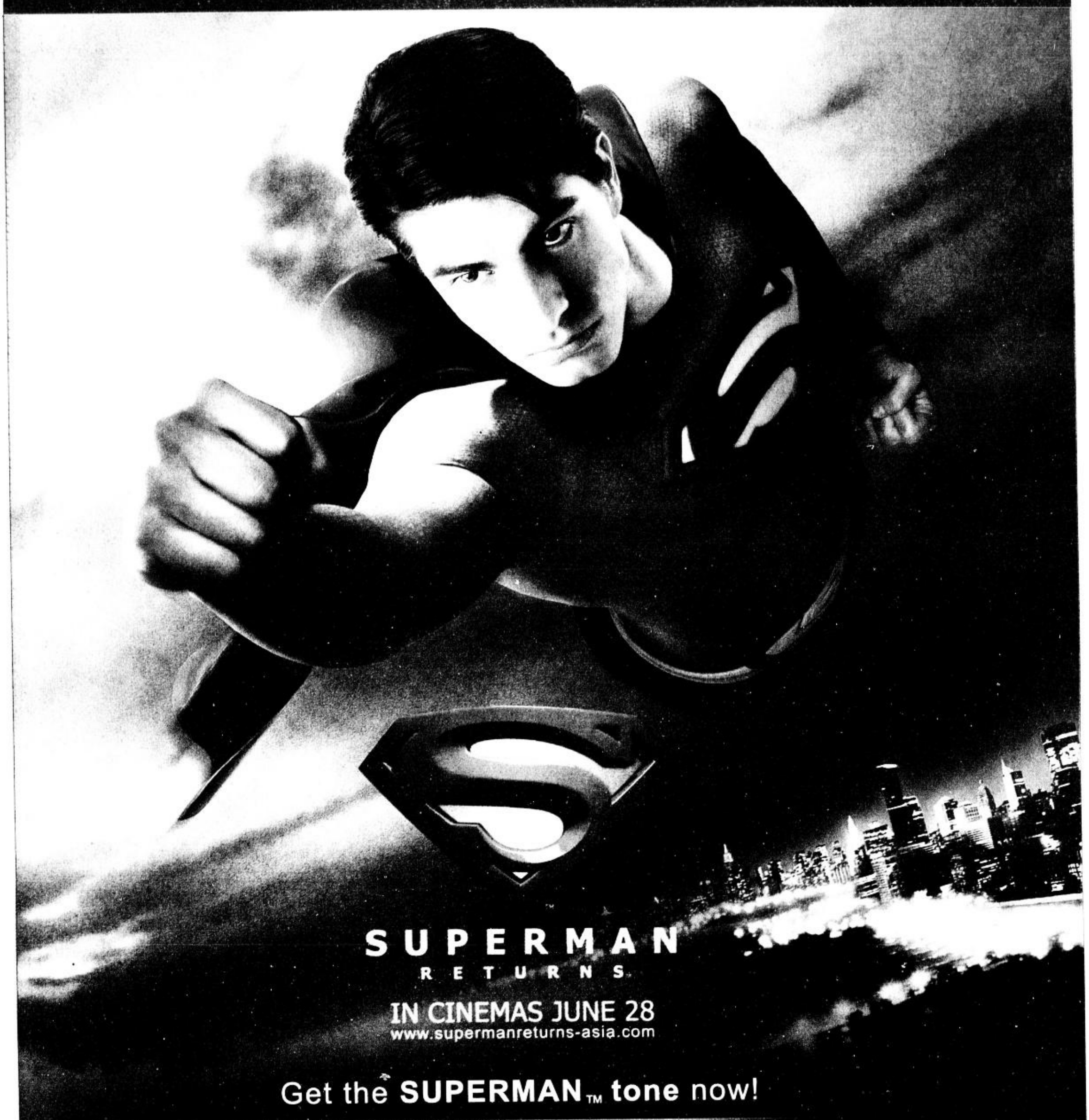

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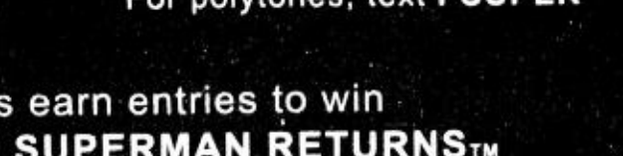

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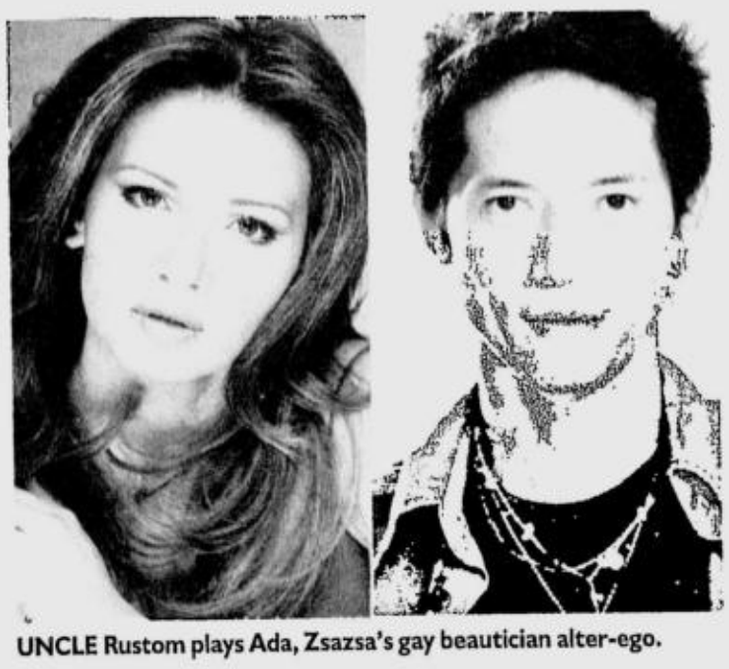

UNCLE Rustom plays Ada, Zsazsa's gay beautician alter-ego.

Padilla, Padilla!

Zsazsa and Rustom land iconic roles in 'Zaturnnah' movie

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

THERE ARE two Padillas in the movie version of Carlo Vergara's comic book, "Ang Kagilagilalas na Pakikipagsapalaran ni Zsazsa Zaturnnah"—one of the 10 approved entries for the Metro Manila Film Festival.

Regal Entertainment producer Lily Monteverde confirmed with INQUIRER Entertainment that Rustom Padilla had been tapped to play Ada, the man-hating gay beautician who transforms into Zaturnnah, the "powerful, voluptuous and red-haired" superheroine to be portrayed by Zsazsa Padilla.

"As of now, only Rustom and Zsazsa have been cast for sure," director Joel Lamangan said.

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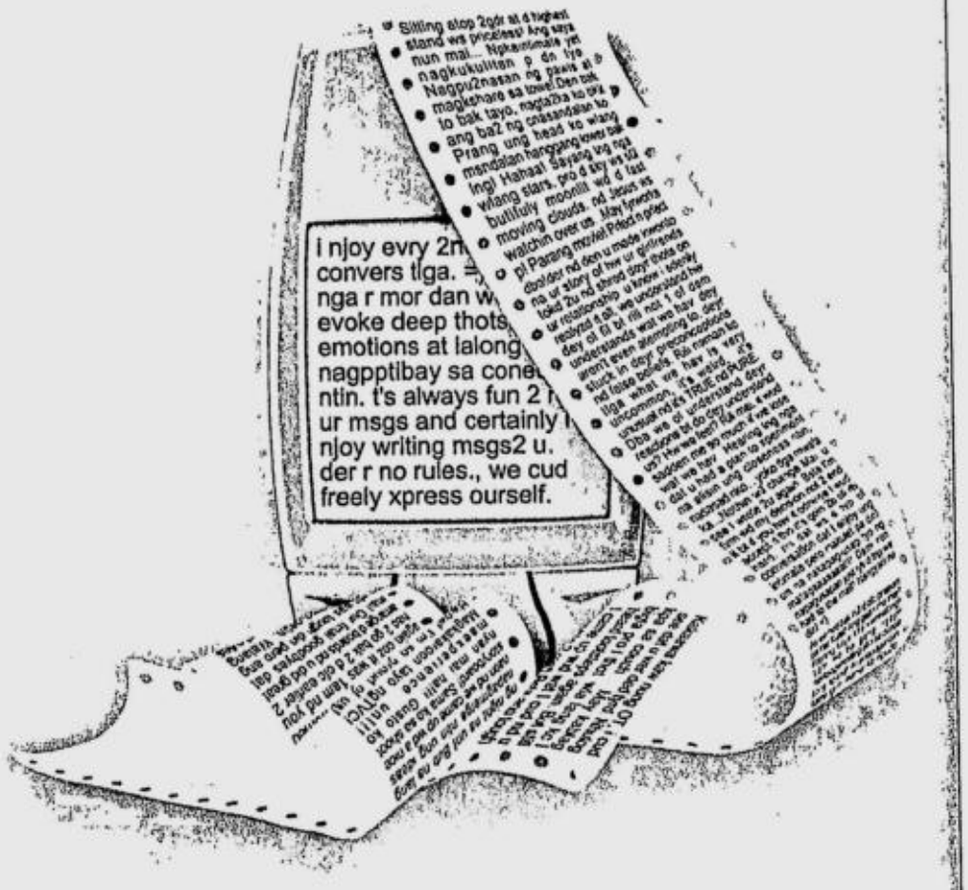

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SEAMUS Davey-Fitzpatrick and Julia Stiles in "The Omen"

'The Omen': Hell hath some fu

REVIEW

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Contributor

THE NEW REMAKE OF "THE OMEN" recreates some frightening aspects of the original film, which first screened three decades ago. While the genuine chills are few and far between this time, the entire experience feels cohesive and whole enough, and shows adequate skill and visualization on filmmaker John Moore's part. It shows the natural, carefully paced progression of events, which center on such an unnatural character, the prophesied anti-Christ child, and the people who try to figure out his real nature.

Remember when a slew of pre-millennial films were apocalypse-themed and portended death and destruction back in the late '90s? Perhaps the dumbest of them, "End of Days," was able to incorporate impending doom into its "deadline," 1999—which, when inverted, show three number 6s, or the "beast's
remake is able t
ploy, as the film
on 06/06/06. Th
of such symbo
handed when it
credits. It gets d
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come "6" and cr
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But symbolism
cacies recur and
the strange going
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Perfectly cast a
of this doom-bri
Schreiber (as a y
sador) and Julia
endangered wife
they're raising a
(Seamus Davey-
ously, not for lon
nicely are David
waite, and Mia F
and mystery to h
role).

Believably cre

Strangely, the y
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possess the devil
nal kid actor see
Nevertheless, he
and believable
things to the peo
ly jolting scene
nightmares, as w
graphic deaths o
and those rotte
scary as hell, than

Like the mo
Exorcist" and
Dead," the boy
other metaphor
looks, or for lo
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spherics; althou
maintain inte
and its details h
to and parodied
1976. Let's ho
doesn't inspire
other doomsday
cidences with ca

Good 'kuyas'

FROM Jade Balani:

This is in relation to the st
of Bayani San Diego Jr. on "Pi
Big Brother" and the censors.

Truly, director Lauren Dy
and Dr. Randy Dellosa served as
Big Brothers to the housemates of the controversial reality show.

FEEDBACK

I commend them for properly handling the case of housemate Al
Gachalian. The kid volunte
to be evicted because he cou
cope with stress inside
house.

He seemed confused and
pressed during his eviction
now, on TV guestings, it l
like he is a better-adjusted
vidual.

Agree with NUT

From Elizabeth Peralta (bperalta@info.com.ph, Guadalupe, Makati City:

Please convey to Mr. Torr
concurrence with his lis
shortcomings on the part c
local TV networks, espe
midnight broadcasts of new
current affairs programs an
many ads.

In popular shows, adve
ments are longer than the a
program on a per hour
They have gone around KBI
scribed ratios by extending
hour shows to two-hour sl
Also, there is no more semb
of discipline in the schedul

"Jewel in the Palace" is
fect example. It changes
slots at least two or three ti
month. It is exasperating.

I also get so tired of seei
same faces, particularly or
grams of GMA 7, which r
their contract artists fron
program to another, or
GMA 7 to QTV.

We are at the mercy of th
works who produce thei
shows, using their respecti
ble of stars. How many tim
Angel Locsin and Richard
tierez be reincarnated?
many times a week will we
seeing Joey de Leon?

And we see the same s
movies that the networks pr
There is such a thing as satu
It is good that ABC 5 is pro
be a good alternative. I supp
Torre in his efforts to allevi
plight of televiewers.

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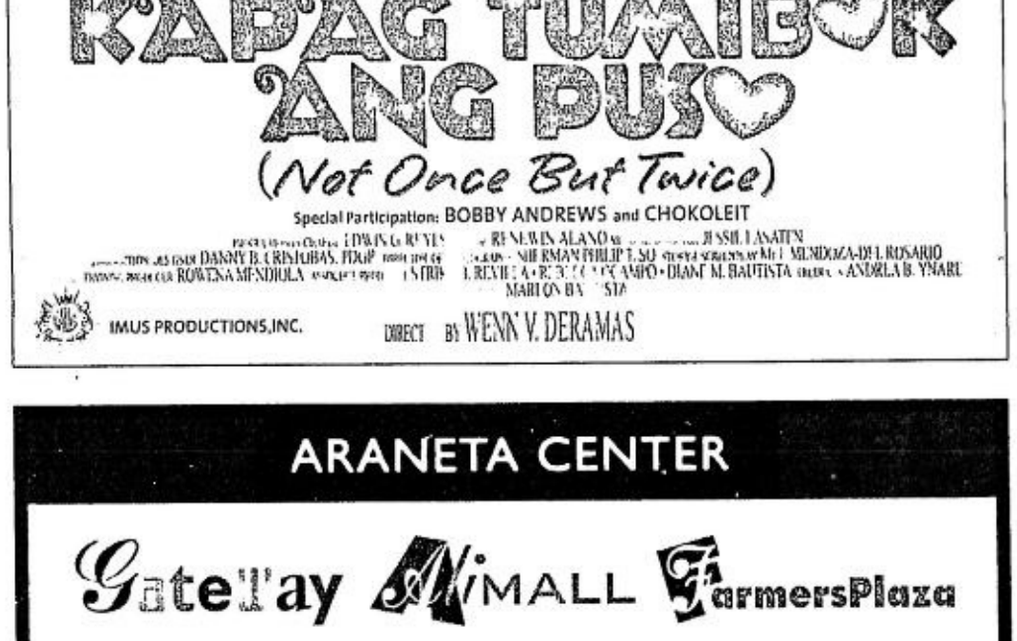

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TAKE THE LEAD 1:00 / 3:50 / 6:40 / 9:30	MANAY PO 12:40 / 2:55 / 5:10 / 7:25 / 9:40	THE DA VINCI CODE 12:30 / 3:40 / 6:50 / 10:00	
ALL ABOUT LOVE 2:10 / 2:35 / 5:00 / 7:25 / 9:50	BENCH WARMERS 12:25 / 2:15 / 4:05 FAILURE TO LAUNCH 6:00 / 8:00 / 10:00	X-MEN 3 12:40 / 3:00 / 5:20 / 7:40 / 10:00	CARS 11:35 / 2:05 / 4:35 OMEN 666 7:00 / 9:25

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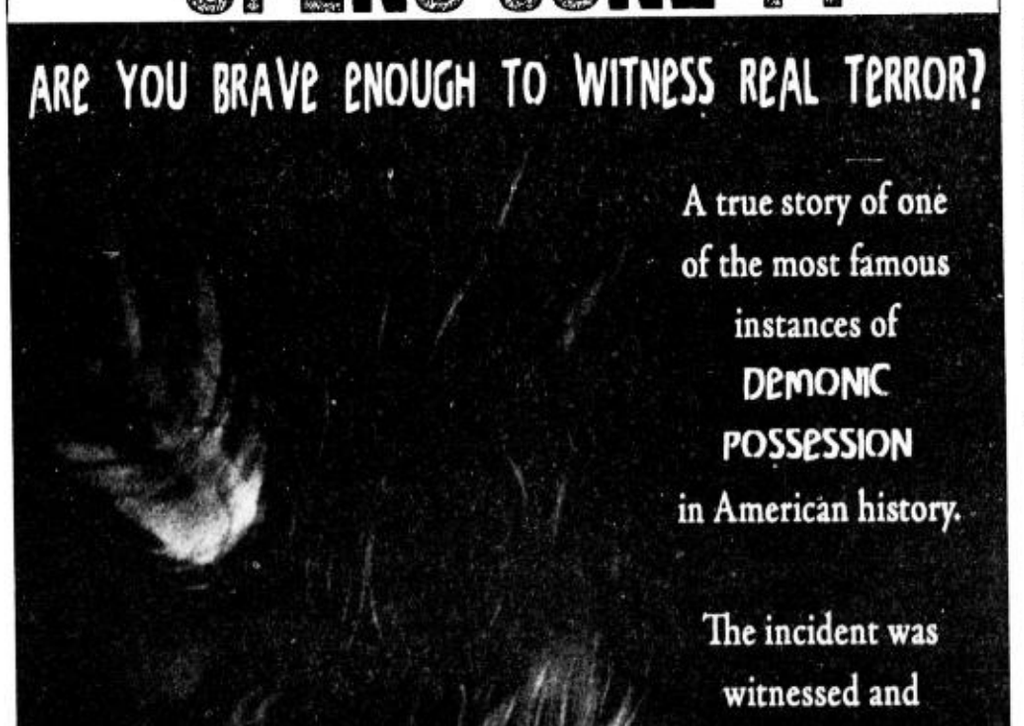

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ury

umber." "The Omen" make use of a similar pened in most places it's timely, but the use ism becomes heavy- omes to the opening tracting to see the let- n the cast's names be- ss shapes, respective-

and supernatural intri- merge quite well with -on in the story, made oning actual tragedies. massive natural disas- sfortunes are tied into ns, which supposedly g of darker days, and t hell's avatar is here. the unwitting parents ger are brooding Liev ung American ambas- tiles (as his constantly They're unaware that demon-child, Damien itzpatrick) but, obvi- . Rounding up the cast Thewlis, Pete Postleth- rrow (who adds class r overprotective nanny

py

ung actor doesn't radi- looks alone; he doesn't h charm that the origi- ned to naturally have. shown to be creepy hen he does horrible ie around him. The tru- however, are in Stiles' ll as in the violent and certain characters. Oh, n Rottweilers, they're s to able editing! ter-children of "The Night of the Living "The Omen" is yet an- or danger that belies t innocence. The re- s that through atmo- gh it takes effort to . because the concept ve been paid homage countless times since e that this remake ny more sequels, or licks, numerical coin- endar dates or not.

'CHILD OF OUR TIME'

Televiewers are treated this month to the intriguing stories on "Child of Our Time 2005," the Hallmark Channel's breakthrough reality series. Season premiere is on June 18, 7:55 p.m., replay on June 19, 3:15 p.m. The program continues to follow 26 babies born at the start of the millennium, and their families. The kids are now in school.

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OMEN 666 R13 1:10,3:30,5:50, 8:10,10:30	FAILURE TO LAUNCH PG13 12:40,3:00,5:20 X-MEN: THE LAST STAND PG13 7:40,10:00	THE INSIDE MAN PG13 12:15,2:45,5:15, 7:45,10:15

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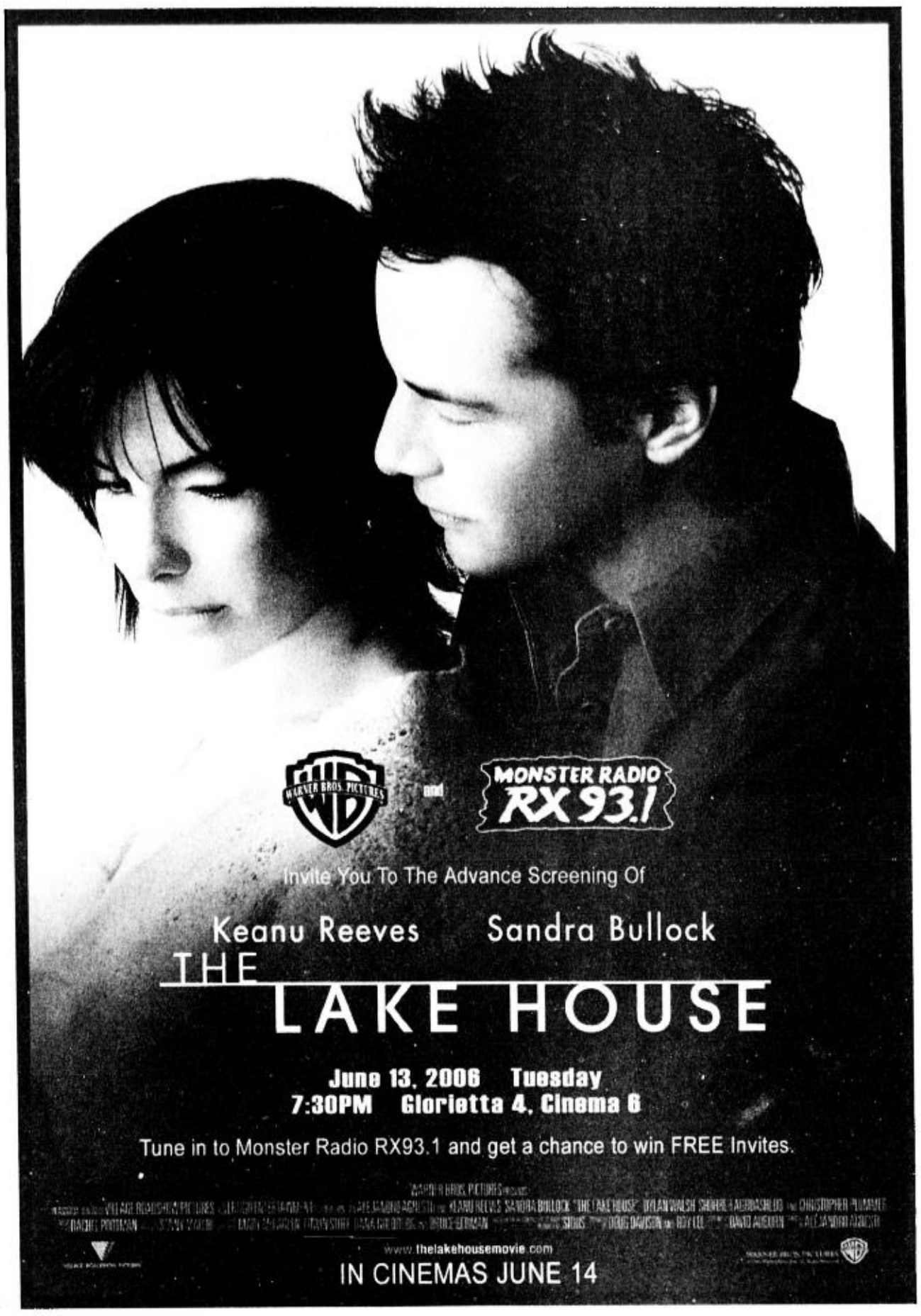

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G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 CARS	2 THE OMEN	3 THX INSIDE MAN 12:30, 3:00, 5:30, 8:00, 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 FAILURE TO LAUNCH	5 TAKE THE LEAD	6 X-MEN: THE LAST STAND	7 THE DA VINCI CODE
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 X-MEN: THE LAST STAND		2 THE OMEN	
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX CARS 2:30, 5:10, 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS		2 THX THE OMEN 2:00, 4:20, 6:40, 9:00, 11:20 GUARANTEED SEATS	
	3 TAKE THE LEAD 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	4 X-MEN: THE LAST STAND 2:20, 4:30, 6:40, 8:50, 11:00 GUARANTEED SEATS	5 INSIDE MAN 1:15, 3:45, 6:15, 8:45, 11:15 GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX CARS		2 INSIDE MAN	
	3 THE OMEN	4 TAKE THE LEAD	5 X-MEN: THE LAST STAND	
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M2 MARKET! MARKET!	1 THE OMEN		2 CARS	
	3 TAKE THE LEAD	4 INSIDE MAN	5 X-MEN: THE LAST STAND	

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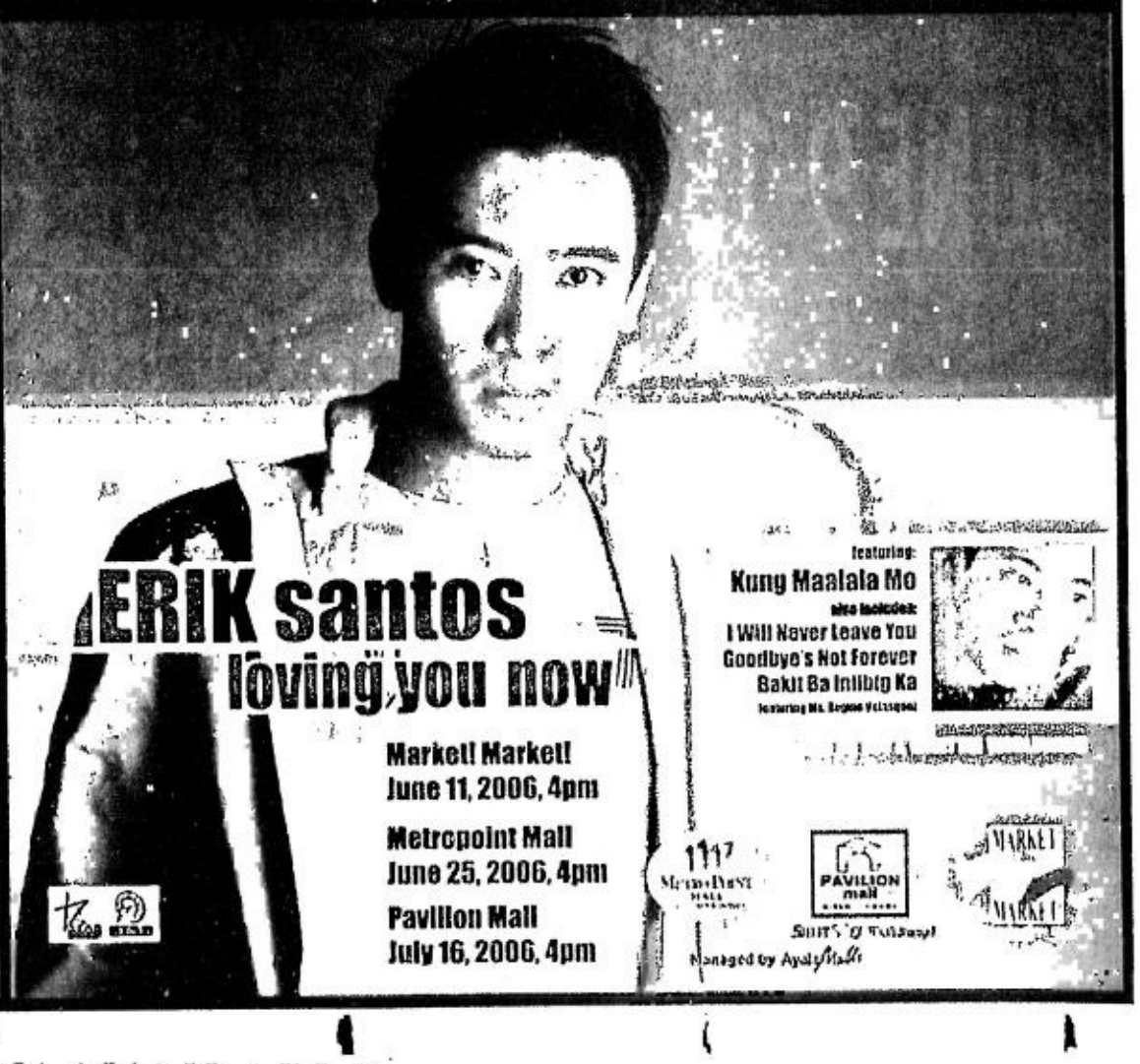

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Black Eyed 'balut'

RUSHES

THE PINOY BLACK EYED PEA, Allan Pineda, a.k.a. Apl.de.ap, says he likes coming home to the Philippines to eat *balut*. Actually, what he said was, "I like buying *balut* from street vendors." So there, the *balut* has to come with a street vendor. Otherwise...

Anything but

Exercise does not have to be a tedious and boring ordeal, according to the organizers of the Nestlé Fitnesse "Fit In" event in Boracay. The boys on the island at the time couldn't agree more. What with these beauties—Jacquilou Blanco, Mylene Dizon, Reema Chanco and Nancy Castiliogne—leading activities.

"FIT-IN" belles, from left: Nancy Castiglione, Jacquilou Blanco, Mylene Dizon and Reema Chanco

'Amazing Dare'

IC Mendoza is among the celebrity contestants in ABC 5's "Amazing Dare," airing today at 10 p.m. The participants became farmers for a day. That is why IC's mom, our columnist Dolly Anne Carvajal, did not join. Kidding!

IC, Jopay Paguia, Carlos Morales and Sheree

No wedding plans

SWAKOPMUND, Namibia—Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt have denied that wedding bells are in the air, saying they want to concentrate for now on their newborn daughter and Jolie's two adopted children.

"There is nothing in the air. The focus is the kids, and we are obviously extremely committed to the children and as parents together," Jolie told a news conference for local journalists at a hotel in the Namibian coastal town of Swakopmund. "So that kind of says it for us, and to have a ceremony on top of it is nothing."

Okay, fine. *AP*

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HIS MAJESTY IS BACK.
GARFIELD 2

OPENS JUNE 14

Padilla, Padilla! From page A3-1

And Ogie Alcasid, who was originally cast as Ada?

"I talked with his manager Leo Dominguez and promised to make it up to him," said Monteverde.

The Regal matriarch gave the same assurance to the movie's original director Mark Meily and his choice as Zaturnnah, Rufa Mae Quinto. "I'd like to publicly apologize for what happened," Monteverde said. "I hope to work with them in future projects."

MAXI Cinco takes measurements for costume.

She added that they were still waiting for the availability of comedian Allan K., whom Meily had considered as Didi, Ada's scene-stealing sidekick.

If Allan is unavailable, Monteverde said. "Ogie can portray Didi. It's also a plum part—lengthy and funny."

For Femina, Zaturnnah's extra-terrestrial nemesis, the names of singers-actresses Vina Morales and Pops Fernandez have cropped up.

INQUIRER caught up with Zsazsa while she was in the middle of training. She recounted: "I've been training for this movie since March. Even when Rufa Mae was attached to the project, I continued working out because it was great for my figure."

Right after the gym workout, designer Maxi Cinco took Zsazsa's measurements for the Zaturnnah costume.

Zsazsa said she was pleased that her "uncle" Rustom would be playing her onscreen alter ego. "He's the cousin of my dad Carlos Jr. His father Roy is the brother of my grandfather Carlos Sr."

Rustom, who was also training at a gym at the time of the phone interview, told INQUIRER that he was "very happy" as well. "It was first offered to me two months ago," he said, but there were "a few hitches" at the time.

He pointed out that the "kink" was not the talent fee, as rumored. "It's just that, I didn't have a manager then"

Rustom signed up with talent manager Arnold Vegafria last month.

Monteverde asserted that the stars have been very "cooperative" about money matters. "They can earn more on television, but they understand the predicament of movie producers. They really want to do this movie."

Lamangan was at an event of the Nagkakaisang Mga gagawa ng Peliculang Pilipino at the time of the phone interview. He said he was raring to start shooting the third week of June, "if only for the prospect of providing more jobs for movie workers."

Pilipinas: Ang Nakaraan

Pahina 12

Ngayong ika-12 ng Hunyo, sabay-sabay nating ipagbunyi ang ating kalayaan.

Enchanted Kingdom, bukas sa araw ng Kalayaan, ika-12 ng Hunyo mula alas diyes ng umaga hanggang alas diyes ng gabi. Espesyal ang araw na ito! Espesyal din at mahaba ang ating mga paputok pagdating ng alas nuebe ng gabi. Halina't magsaya!

Mula Hunyo 5 hanggang Agosto 3 ang Enchanted Kingdom ay bukas ng Sabado at Linggo lamang sa ganap na ika-10 ng umaga hanggang ika-10 ng gabi. Ang paputok ay mapapanood ng alas nuebe ng gabi.

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The problem with being Lindsay Lohan

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Ruben V. Nepales

LOS ANGELES—Poor **Lindsay Lohan** has been the target of unsavory rumors, from claims that she has a drug abuse problem to having an eating disorder.

Now she is being accused of a $1 million-a-year shopping addiction. There are allegations that she goes to a hypnotherapist to cure her of a habit that supposedly involves blowing as much as $100,000 in stores in just one day.

These have all been denied by Lindsay's camp, which also decried Vanity Fair for claiming in a cover story that she had tried drugs "a little" but had gotten that out of "her system."

It doesn't help Lindsay's case that, when she shows up for interviews, she is stick thin. She is always a disarming interview subject though, poised and mature beyond her 19 years. One ray of sunshine in Lindsay's life and career these days is her first indie film, "A Prairie Home Companion," in which she gets to act with and play the daughter of **Meryl Streep**. She also gets to use her underutilized talents as a good singer by singing in the film, based on the popular US radio show hosted by **Garrison Keillor**, which also stars **Lily Tomlin, Virginia Madsen, John C. Reilly, Woody Harrelson** and **Tommy Lee Jones.**

In a recent interview with Virginia, I asked what made her defend Lindsay in one article. She replied, "I remember seeing her on one of the late night talk shows. She had to defend (the size of) her breasts. I think she was 16 at that time. That's when I first became aware of her. I felt compassionate toward her and somewhat protective because I found it very offensive that young girls are asked, 'At 15, did you have your bust done? Are you still a virgin?' I find that incredibly offensive and just wrong and a little bit creepy. I don't think they ask young men such questions as, 'Do you have pubic hair yet?'"

The actress who won acclaim in "Sideways" added of her "Prairie" co-star: "She was like our kid on the set. This was not a movie that she had to carry on her shoulders. Everyone felt a bit protective of her. She's very easy to love."

When I asked the always excellent actor John C. Reilly about Lindsay, he had a glowing comment as well: "She earned the respect of **Robert Altman** and Meryl Streep. *Meryl Streep.* You're not going to get better than that. Lindsay really has the chops of a real actor. She has the burden of having to grow up with everyone scrutinizing every single thing that she does. Had someone scrutinized me [as much] when I was a teenager, my career might have been over before it started. But she handles it pretty well. She is a lot more mature than I was at her age. At the end of the day, I just want to work with folks who are committed to being good actors and she is one."

In a separate interview, Lindsay opened up about the issues haunting her.

How do you defend yourself from some of the negative stuff released about you—for instance, the Vanity Fair cover story?

I don't need to defend myself. I don't usually read all that because the stories harp too much on the negative rather than on the positive. But I think something good comes out of everything.

So that Vanity Fair cover story wasn't truthful?

Some of it was true. And some of the words were misconstrued and twisted a bit but I love Vanity Fair. The positive thing about that one is, I feel I was able to bring an awareness to younger girls to take care of themselves, be comfortable with their body and let beauty show through from the inside rather than from the outside.

But we are not certain which ones are not true.

I'd rather not go into details (laughter).

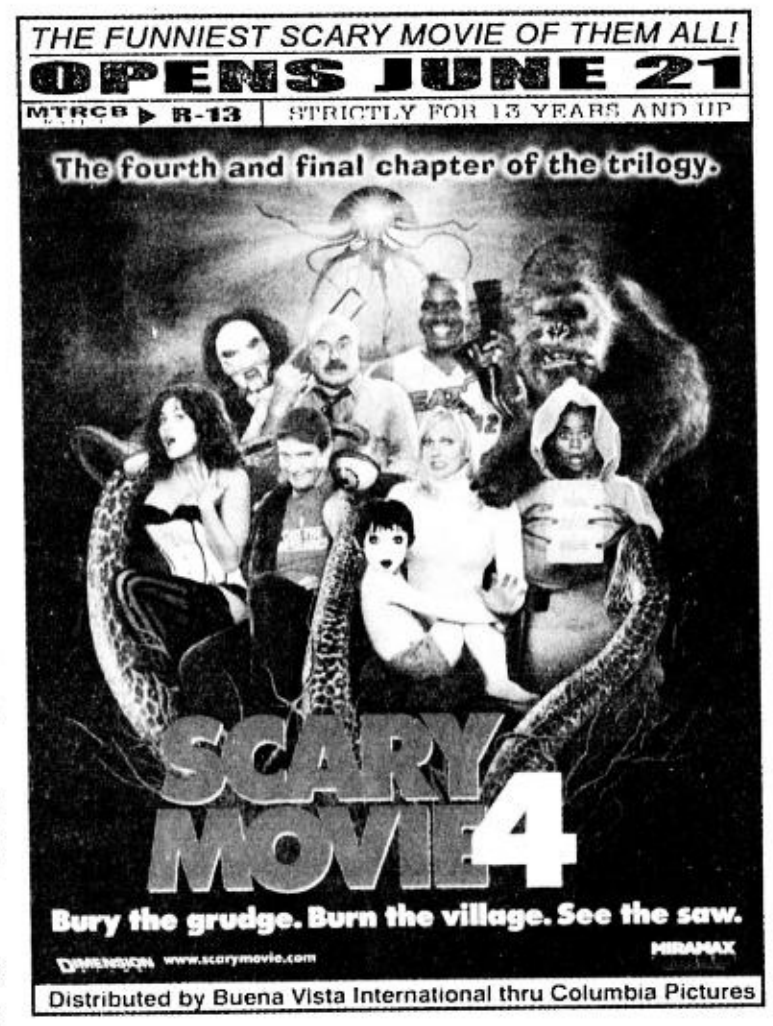
Some have the impression that you enjoy being in the public eye, and that you don't mind being chased by the paparazzi.

I do mind.

But do you enjoy just being

THE PROBLEM/ A2-2

LINDSAY plays Meryl Streep's daughter in Robert Altman's latest.



Sister Sledge at Big Dome July 1

SHOW TIME

NEARLY THREE DECADES SINCE ITS RElease, Sister Sledge's "We Are Family" continues to enjoy air play in the Philippines. It has become an anthem for women's groups as well as gatherings with unity as message.

More recently, the song was heard on "Mission Impossible 3."

Sister Sledge—composed of siblings Kathie, Jonie, Kim and Debbie—did back-up vocals for other artists before they came out with their first album. "We Are Family" was written and produced by Bernard Edwards and Nile Rogers, the same team behind the band Chic's "Le Freak."

SISTER Sledge

The group performs at the Araneta Coliseum in Quezon City on July 1 in the show "Retro Mania: Village People and Sister Sledge Live in Manila." Call 633-9825 to 27 or 911-5555.

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OPENS JUNE 21

AN AMERICAN HAUNTING:
BASED ON THE BELL WITCH LEGEND

A TRUE GHOST STORY: The Bell Witch was known to be the spirit of Kate Batts.

The haunting events reported to have occurred at Adams Station between 1817 and 1820 are far more dramatic and terrifying than any comparable demonic stories like THE EXORCIST, THE AMITYVILLE HORROR or THE EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE.

An entity identified as Kate is said to have freely spoke with numerous people and to have killed John Bell and haunted his family to no end. Betsy, John's daughter suffered the most through physical abuse by having her hair pulled and getting slapped and pinched to the point that her face and arms were covered with welts and bruises.

U.S. President Andrew Jackson also reported to have challenged Kate and to have retreated out of fear. Commenting: "*I would rather fight the entire British army single handed than face the Bell Witch again!*"

The Bell Witch Legend, as the phenomenon has become known, has remained relatively obscure, except to residents of Middle Tennessee, until the spectacular success of the recent and horrible movie THE BLAIR WITCH PROJECT provided it with a level of notoriety. However, unlike the totally fictitious video rendition, popularized because its amateur recording with camcorders made it seem real, the events of Adams story are claimed as factual. The only similarity between the two is its moniker.

People living outside of Middle Tennessee are not likely to have heard of the Bell Witch. However, the legend endures in community stage plays, campfire scare stories, the annual Halloween trip by a Nashville TV crew, and other forms of oral tradition. However, as scary as this story is, it remains relatively obscure, even with the aid of local entrepreneurs trying to capitalize more on its entertainment potential than on its historical significance.

For those interested in the paranormal, either promoting it or debunking it, the Legend of the Bell Witch is ideal. Supposedly witnessed by hundreds of people, including the 7th U.S. president Andrew Jackson and having achieved the ultimate in manifestation, the death of a victim, its significance makes research of the phenomenon unquestionable.

Are you brave enough to face real terror in **AN AMERICAN HAUNTING?** For more info on The Bell Witch Legend, visit www.anamericanhauntingonline.com.

The problem with . . .

From page A2-1

with a small group of friends and enjoying some privacy?

What is privacy (laughter)?

What do you do during the rare times that you are by yourself?

It's funny because as I grow older in this business, I notice how lonely it can get to spend three straight months with a single group of people—your cast and crew. You work with these people day in and day out and then it stops. Suddenly, you're by yourself. I get very frustrated creatively because I don't know what to do with myself. I don't really like to be alone. I grew up in a big family. I see them when I have time off. I am with my sister and friends a lot on my time off. I like to just drive. When I am by myself, I write a lot. I have been getting into photography.

LILY Tomlin

And about being chased by the paparazzi all the time?

You have to understand, to accept that it's part of [the package] if you aspire to stay in this business. You want to have your picture taken; you get off on that stuff. I can't really complain about it because I have an audience to cater to and people are going to read these magazines, whether the stories are true or false. Ninety-seven percent of the time, it's false. I am very honest so I will always tell you when something is true or not. But I do think that there needs to be limitations as far as chasing and stalking celebrities are concerned. God forbid if there are children in the car. It gets to a point where it gets to be ridiculous and uncomfortable.

Do you feel your age?

I don't feel like a 19-year-old. I am not saying that in a negative way. I just feel that I've grown up around adults my whole life. I've gone through a lot so I feel wise beyond my years. I feel older than I am. I've also had a lot of responsibilities just amongst my family. I have very strong maternal instincts to begin with because I have younger siblings. I am close to my mother.

JOHN C. Reilly

You are wearing the symbol (bracelet) of Kabbalah (a body of mystical teachings often based on the Hebrew Scriptures that has been embraced by Madonna and other celebrities). Who introduced you to Kabbalah and what are you getting out of it?

I was introduced to it a long time ago by some friends. It was so much of a trend rather than a belief that people had. I don't subscribe to any particular religion. I am open to all religions but I have spoken to people at The Kabbalah Centre in New York. My mom's been reading their books and she likes it. I like the fact that when you go to The Kabbalah Centre, we talk mostly about ego and just keeping away negative energy. The evil eye is a big part of doing Kabbalah but I am not a hardcore Kabbalist. I go through phases.

How big is your closet?

I have many closets (laughter) and I really, really, really love clothes. My style changes constantly—I am very indecisive. Where I am staying now, I converted the dining room into a closet (laughter). I am not kidding. I'm serious. I have great pieces. I love to dress up and style all my friends.

Do the designers send you clothes?

They don't give things as much (laughter). I get in trouble for buying so much but Karl Lagerfeld is very nice and generous. He gives some good Chanel pieces.

VIRGINIA Madsen

Do you consider your tastes trendy?

I'm into trendy things, of course I am. I have a 12-year-old sister—I have to be. She has to look up to me and think that the things that I'm wearing are cool. Now she knows things like vintage clothes but I don't like to be as trendy. I like to start the trends, not follow them.

When you have bad days, how do you handle them?

Well, I put on a good pair of stilettos, some red lipstick and a great dress (laughter) and I go shopping.

Is this true? One day you were late on the set of "A Prairie Home Companion" ...

Ooh, someone's late one day. Wow (laughter). Actually, we were all there on time. Everyone was always on the set every day. Meryl and I are very close. She didn't call it off. She's not that type of person. We had a great time. Everything was very positive. There was good energy and we were all happy and thankful to be there, to be with a great group of actors who were out of LA and New York, places where we get chased by the paparazzi. In Saint Paul, Minnesota, everyone was able to focus on the art and the craft of film.

What was it like working with the great Robert Altman?

It was adequate (laughter). No, it was amazing. This is my first independent film and being on the set with everyone, especially Robert Altman, was an incredible experience. He makes sure that you are comfortable and he's really open to changing things. I don't think I could have asked for anything more. I think he's the greatest person to work with in terms of doing a film with such a great ensemble cast. He really knows how to let realism show through.

You are a singer yourself so you must have enjoyed singing in this movie.

I really enjoyed the fact that we sang live, no less. It was also extremely nerve-wracking especially when you have **Kevin Kline**, Meryl Streep, Woody Harrelson, Robert Altman and everyone standing on one side of the stage.

Were you aware that Meryl could sing that well? I was astounded.

Yeah, Meryl can do anything when she puts her mind to it. She's amazing. She taught me a lot, whether it's being comfortable in front of everyone on the set or being comfortable in my own skin. I was such an observer on that set just watching everyone and how they worked with each other. We improvised so much, which was so much fun. We had so much dialogue. Meryl actually said this recently in an interview—that I was the only one remembering my lines and writing them down for everyone in my notebook because in some of the scenes I have a notebook. So I was actually just cheating.

So you were not writing about suicide after all (her character does in the movie)?

No, definitely not (laughter).

When we interviewed Meryl Streep sometime ago for "Marvin's Room," her movie with Leonardo DiCaprio, she said that she saw Leo smoking many cigarettes a day and always eating popcorn so she kept advising him to eat vegetables instead and that health is most important. Did Meryl advise you on anything?

She asked me for fashion advice (laughter) because she was going to star in 'The Devil Wears Prada.' If I had personal questions, I'd ask her and we would talk about general things. I didn't get yelled at for smoking a thousand cigarettes a day. I don't smoke.

I gave her a bracelet that I hope she hasn't taken off because if she did, she's in trouble (laughter). I wear a similar one every day. It's for good luck. She, her daughters and I went shopping.

It's interesting that two of your coming films deal with assassinations, one of John Lennon and the other of Robert Kennedy. Can you tell us about the film on John's assassin, Mark David Chapman?

I am actually close to **Sean Lennon.** I just did his music video. He's one of my good friends. I have gotten to know **Yoko Ono** pretty well. I feel blessed to know her as well as I do because she's an amazing woman. I spoke with them before I did the film. I'm a huge Beatles fan. My favorite Beatles song is "The Ballad of John and Yoko." I was deejaying the other night with Sean and I played it. I didn't do that movie to put someone with psychotic problems, who took someone else's life, especially that of a legend like John, on a pedestal. I just felt the script was interesting. My character is a person who was actually there when it happened. She's a positive influence in the movie. I want people to know that and I am not trying to support Mark David Chapman in any way.

(E-mail the columnist at rvnepales_5585@yahoo.com.)

Sa lahat ng nakitawa at nakisaya,

Maraming Salamat!!!

"The Rock" Asi Taulava and the Talk 'N Text Phone Pals greet their fans in Sucat

Six amazing years! That's how long Talk 'N Text has been providing Pinoys of all ages with super mega-ling services. To celebrate their 6th year anniversary, Talk 'N Text has been holding the Talk 'N Text AnniverSAYA in six different venues across the country! From Cagayan de Oro to Cebu, Naga to La Union and Antipolo, the final leg of the AnniverSAYA celebration was held in SM City Sucat! A fun-filled day of games and activities culminated with a variety show in the evening, and not even a sudden burst of rain could dampen the festivities. Here's looking forward to even better years ahead for Talk 'N Text!

Up, up and away!

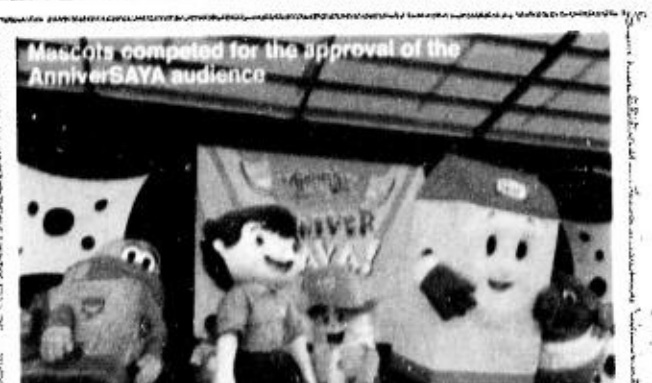
Despite the evening rainshower, the AnniverSAYA continued at the activity center on the 3rd floor of SM City Sucat

Fans hug Vhong Navarro

The scene outside SM City Sucat for Talk 'N Text AnniverSAYA

her face painted

Dominic Ochoa joins fans in rolling Big Dice



Mascots competed for the approval of the AnniverSAYA audience

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Ex-addict gets new high with Japanese snack

Man who tried to kill himself thrice got P40,000 from friends to start a new life

By Aquiles Zonio
PDI Mindanao Bureau

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Hooked on drugs, financially broke, and left by his wife, Edgino Bogayong II attempted to commit suicide thrice.

That was eight years ago.

Today, Bogayong, also known as Kuya Chito, is a successful businessmen here because of friends and the challenge of proving to his family and in-laws that he could stand up.

Kuya Chito found his luck in a Japanese snack food, called Takuyaki business. He has 22 branches all over the country and continues to expand.

Takuyaki is a Japanese delicacy made up of squid and vegetables and comes in the form of bite-size balls.

Kuya Chito recalls that during the lowest stage in his life, his in-laws would say he could not bring up a family.

His daughters were told not to see him because he had no space for them to sleep.

Kuya Chito was an irregular fourth year mechanical engineering student at the University of Mindanao in Davao City when he met and married Junith Rosales, with whom he has two children—Elaiza, 20 and Ejay, 14.

While a student, Kuya Chito knew he was not born to be an engineer. All he wanted to do was to set up his own business.

But with an empty pocket, a troubled marriage and a craving for drugs, his dream seemed impossible.

Then manna came in the form of a P40,000-start-up fund from four of his best friends—Edward Sevilla, an engineer at the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH); Armand Elechicon, district supervisor of Wyeth Philippines; Larry San Juan, now based in London; and Rogel del Rosario, supervisor of the Davao Union Cement—who gave P10,000 each.

"They helped me because they could not accept seeing me down. They are among my priceless possessions in life," he says.

Kuya Chito used the money to put up a Takuyaki business. He then devoted his time and energy running his small business.

Experimenting on Takuyaki, aided by the love for cooking that he acquired from his mother, Kuya Chito finally came up with his own formula. He only needed a stall so he could start selling.

While working as supervisor of Anchor Driving Range, a golf course owned by a scion of a fishing tycoon here, he met Domingo Teng, owner of Kimball Plaza mall.

Teng offered him a space at the ground floor of the mall. It became the first outlet of Kuya Chito's Takuyaki.

Only Chito, his mother and one helper manned the store.

After about two years, Kuya Chito's Takuyaki branched out to Fitmart. A year later, he opened a new branch inside the Gaisano Mall. In the same year, he opened a fourth outlet in KCC mall.

The snack eventually captured the taste and preference of the locals.

The way his business was making headway gave Chito back his lost self-esteem and enthusiasm.

A lot of prayers later, he got back his family.

Now, Kuya Chito says his life is complete.

Today, his wife and children help him run the business.

He admits that his reconciliation with his wife contributed much to the success of his business. "I am happy we are together again. No amount of success can compensate a couple's failure in a home."

Kuya Chito says he was also thankful to Avel Manansala, his friend and adviser, for keeping up with him during the bad times.

Today, Kuya Chito's Takuyaki has branches in Koronadal City, Iloilo, Cebu City and Cagayan de Oro. This month, more branches are opening in Bacolod City and Metro Manila area.

Most of these branches are managed by franchisees. The family manages only seven outlets.

Franchised dealers enter into a five-year lease contract with Kuya Chito's Takuyaki. Franchise fee is P90,000 for every outlet and the owner gets 5 percent of the gross sales of the franchise holders.

Under the contract, Kuya Chito serves as exclusive supplier of the ingredients, equipment and other personal materials like cups and tissue paper.

In Cagayan de Oro, he reveals his franchised dealer earns a net income of P300,000 monthly from six outlets.

Asked about the factors which enabled him to succeed, he says: "Quality product, quality service and patience."

With the success of Kuya Chito's Takuyaki, he ventured into other businesses.

In 2002, his wife put up "Kakanin Atbp." serving native delicacies. Chito says his wife had already recovered the amount she invested.

Recently, he also opened "Hobby Shop," which sells high-end air soft gaming equipment.

"My new business is doing well so far. It's like hitting two birds with just one stone. While enjoying, I'm earning," he says.

EDGINO "Chito" Bogayong (right) while visiting his outlet at the KCC mall.

AQUILES ZONIO, PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

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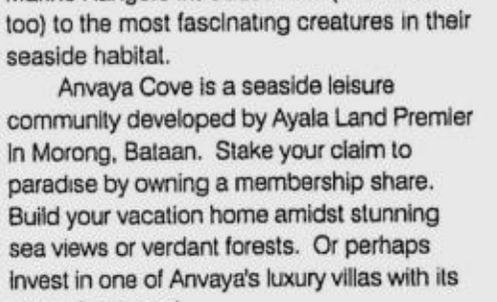

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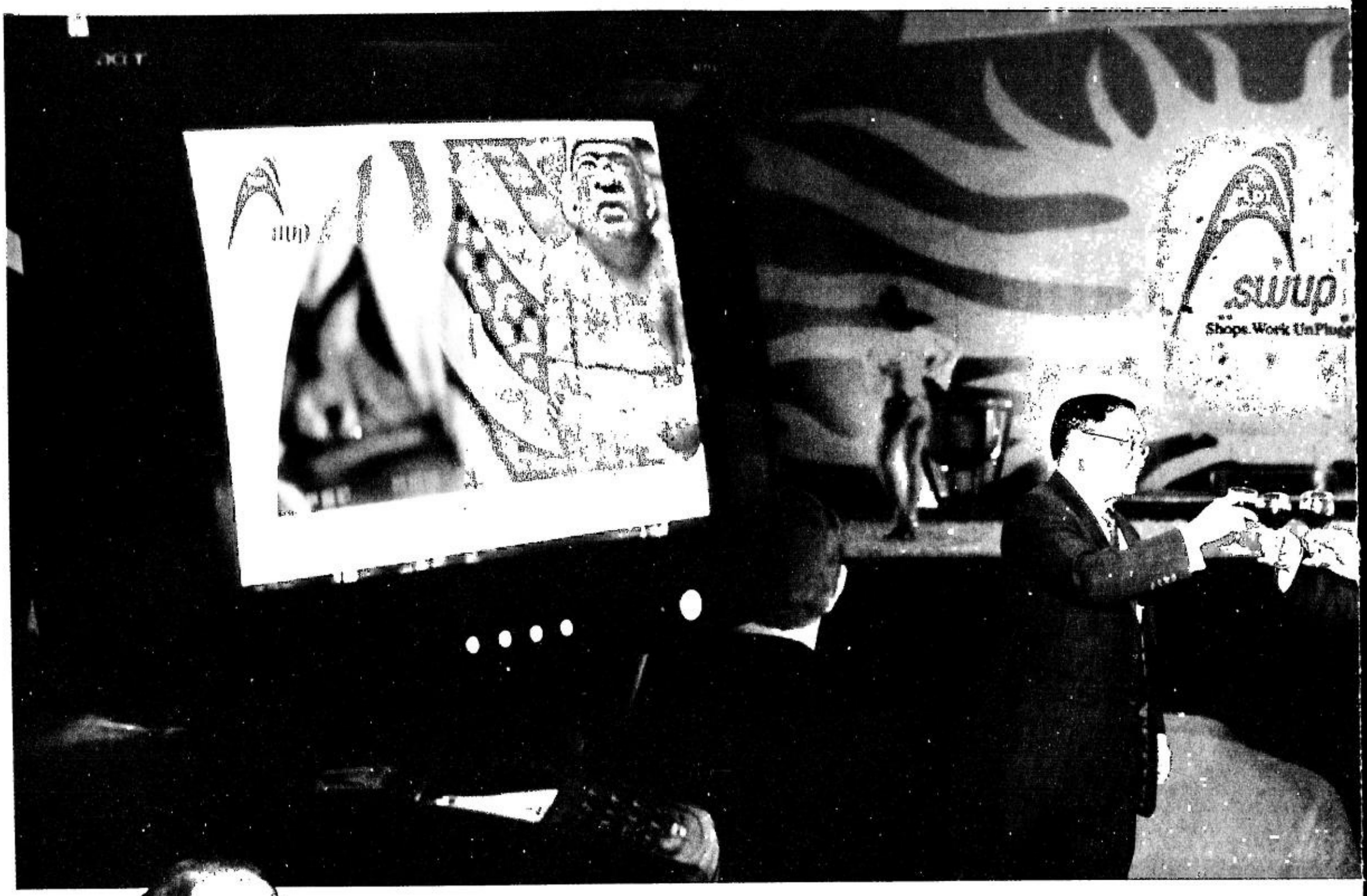


SWUP I ... SWUP IT

PLDT's Launch of Sh Sets the New B

Hundreds were entranced at the NBC tent as the PLDT Group unveiled SWUP, or Shops.Work UnPlugged, a wireless business solution that provides secure virtual private network (VPN) connections for POS terminals. This event marked a new era where ATMs and credit card terminals can now operate without the physical complications of wires and cables.

Businesses such as banks, retailers, fast food deliveries, hotels and transportation companies are now able to extend their reach all over the country. Transactions and inventory can now be observed and monitored in real-time, no matter how far away headquarters may be. Shops.Work UnPlugged not only benefits businesses, it also has great advantages in store for consumers, who will now have the options of getting cash anywhere and paying with credit cards wherever they are. It's easy to see why everyone's so excited. Overnight, SWUP has transformed itself from a buzzword into a new standard for businesses all over the Philippines.

Tribal Trance set the stage for the fusion of business and telecommunications, with SWUP taking center stage. Eager guests filed into the NBC tent, festooned with neon tribal masks and large African hand drums. Each guest was given a SWUP card specifically for the event. The SWUP card was used for registration and product demos with real ATMs (Encash and Export and Industry bank ATMs were situated around the area) and card swipe machines, making it the hottest accessory of the evening. Upon entering, the main attraction was a multi-screen installation situated right in the center of the area. Bars and selling areas lined two sides of the tent, along with PLDT partners Toby's, HBC and M Café, giving guests every opportunity to get the full mileage of their SWUP cards. Percussionists soon broke the ice with deep,

L-R: PLDT SVP and Head of Corporate Business Group Eric Alberto, HBC president and COO Susan Loyola, PLDT's Gary Ignacio, PLDT FVP and Head of Corporate Business Solutions, Nerissa Ramos, Mar Jovero, Janet Atutubo, and Jerry Joel Laureola of HBC.

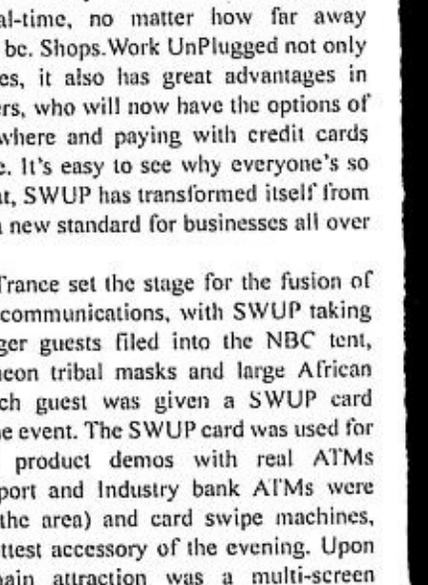
L-R: Kahlil Bagatsing of Channel Technologies, PLDT's Nick Ratuiste, Bien Nieva of Channel Technologies, Danny Tan of Jimac Phils, and Luigi Lopa of PLDT.

L-R: Cris Jovellanos of Xtreme Works and Johanna Dee of Bankard Marketing Group.

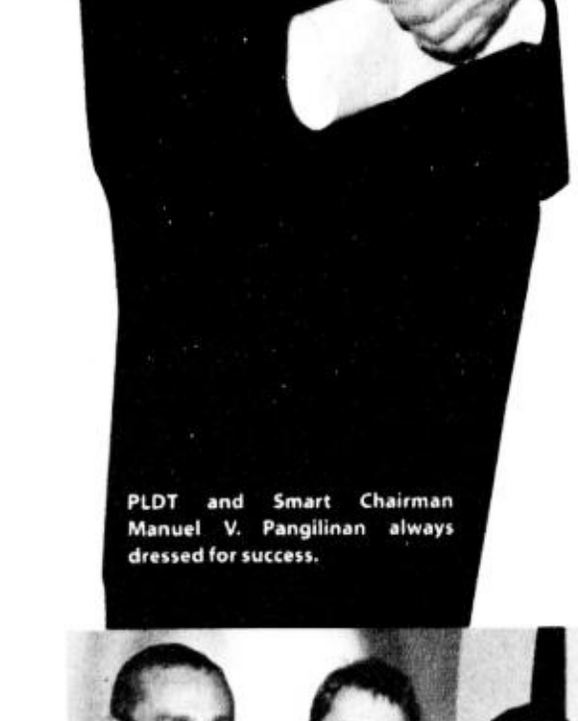
L-R: Robert Go of Prosoft, Jose Maria Valdez of Export and Industry Bank, SVP and Head of Corporate Business Group Eric Alberto, PLDT and Smart President & CEO, Napoleon "Polly" Nazareno, Margarita Ramos of NCR Phils, Mike Mapa and Joel Pineda of Encash, Marga Estebaniar of Nsys Phils, and Carlo Cruz of NCR Phils.

Yellow Cab is on the rescue as Ariel Ureta goes hungry during the show, while SWUP saves the day as he is short on cash!

L-R: Marco Pascual of Bruno's Barbers, Philip Lazarte of Softworks Business Solutions Inc, Alex Cruz of Dreamwave Puerto Galera, Bobby Leung and Jun Pomer of Softworks Business Solutions Inc.



Ray Lugtu of IBM Philippines joins Mocha on stage for a dar



PLDT and Smart Chairman Manuel V. Pangilinan always dressed for success.

L-R: PLDT FVP Cesar Enriquez with Damian Wade of Nokia and Augustos Ferreria EVP and CMO of Generali Pilipinas.

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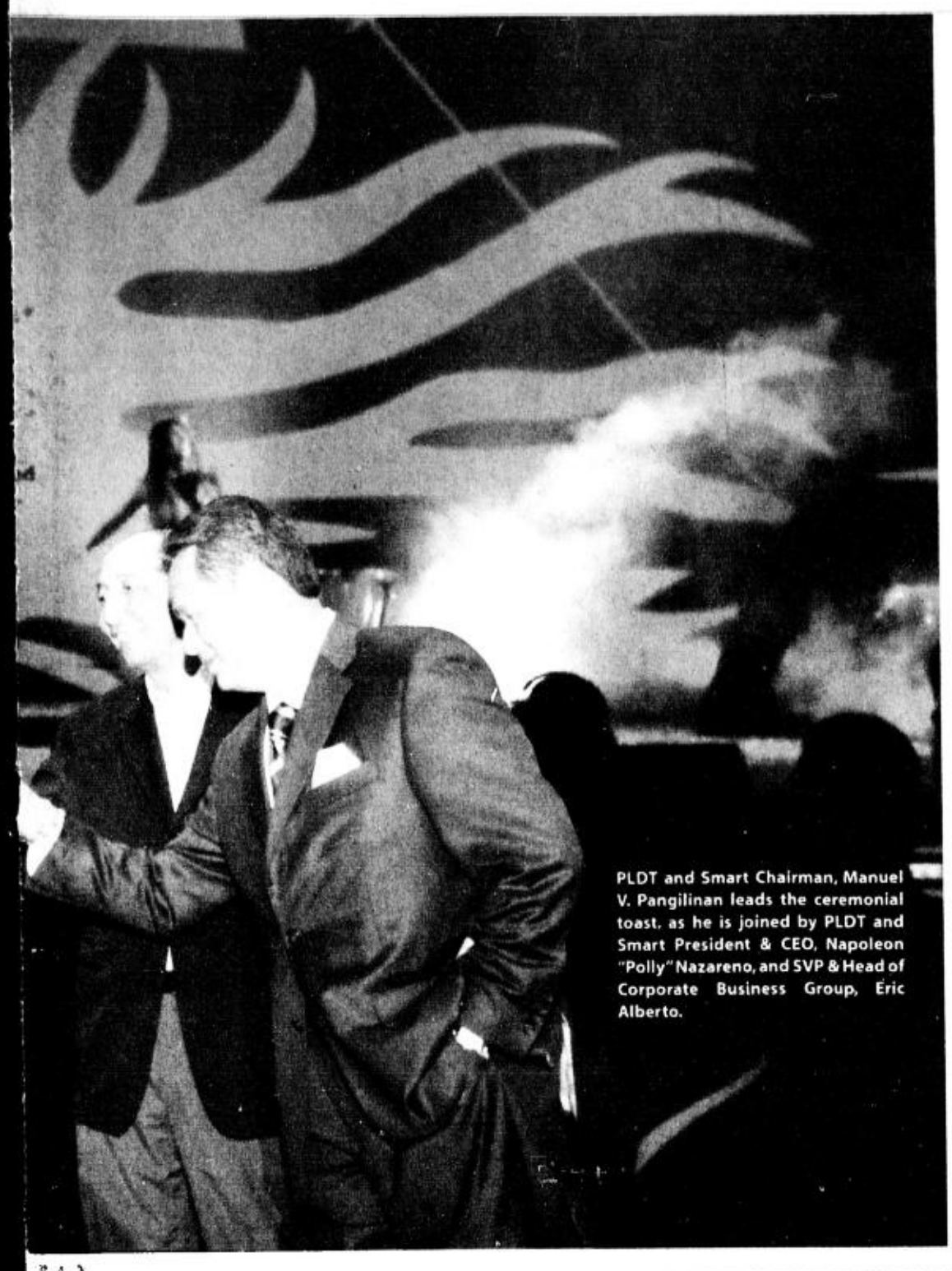
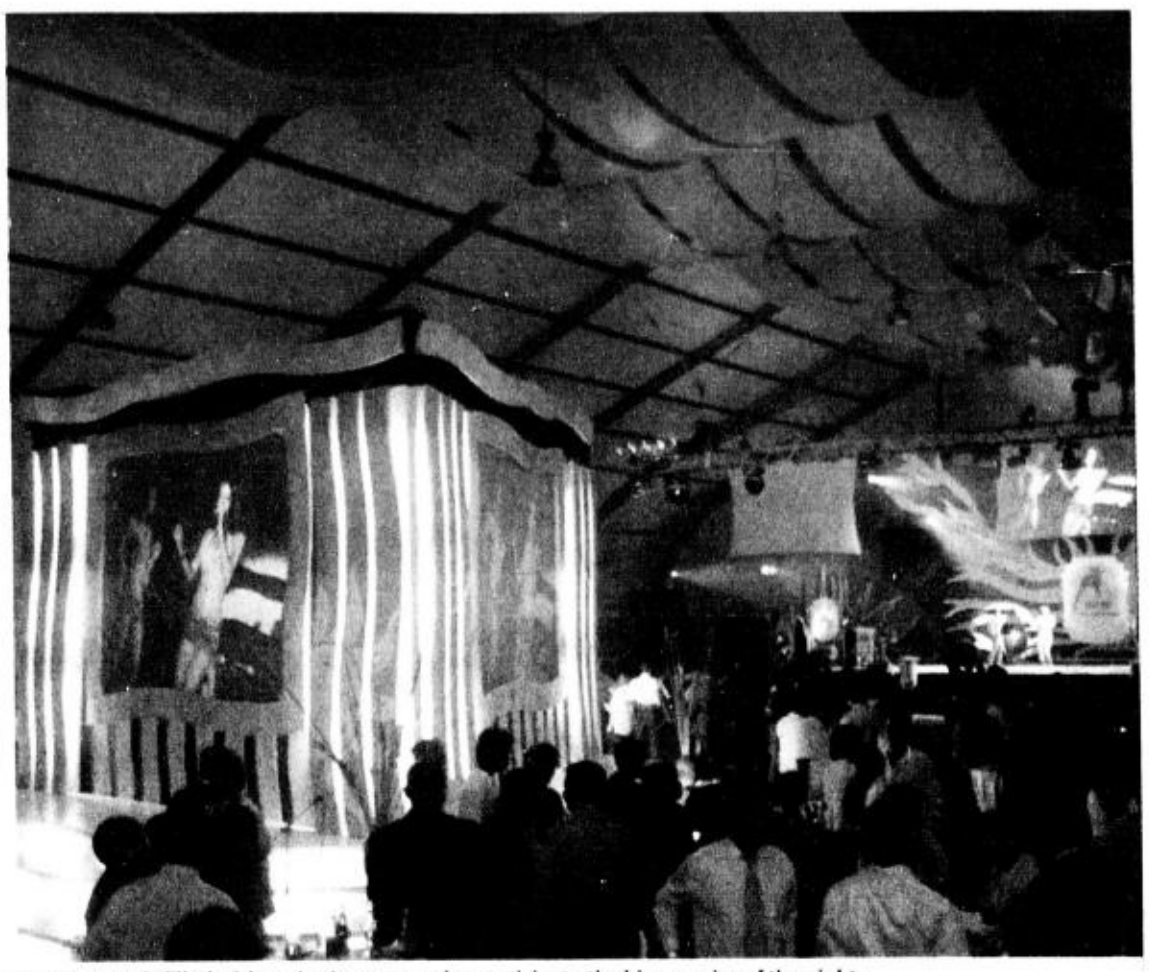


PLDT and Smart Chairman, Manuel V. Pangilinan leads the ceremonial toast, as he is joined by PLDT and Smart President & CEO, Napoleon "Polly" Nazareno, and SVP & Head of Corporate Business Group, Eric Alberto.



The NBC tent is filled with excited guests as they anticipate the big surprise of the night.

The Hotlegs do the "SWUP" on stage...

GOOD!

ops.Work UnPlugged eat of Business

native drumbeats as a video presentation asked the question, "Are we truly one tribe?"

The theme of Tribal Trance dates all the way back to ancient civilizations, when drums were the only means of long distance communication. For centuries, natives used drums to communicate with one another, much like the wireless technology that SWUP uses to link the ATMs and POS terminals within a business community. "Eric R. Alberto, PLDT SVP and Head of Corporate Business Group, said, "Where the beat of the drums used to connect people, our ancestral tribes and primitive markets, today with SWUP we can create a truly connected economy, breaking down technical boundaries of wires, and traditional boundaries of demarcation between urban and rural living."

"The theme is very relevant to the product being launched," said Joel A. Pineda, Jr., Sales Director of Encash, "SWUP is an answer to bring rural areas the convenience of doing their banking transactions right where they live, and not having to go to the city and spend money and time just to get cash or pay their bills."

The program continued with dynamic percussion numbers, dancers in neon costumes and finally, the official unveiling of the SWUP logo. The audience cheered and sang along as "SWUP it!" played, a jingle borrowing from the 80's new wave band Devo's "Whip It". Shops.Work UnPlugged is truly changing the tempo of things, starting a wireless revolution for businesses all over the Philippines. "Cleary, it makes sense to SWUP it," said Napoleon L. Nazareno, President and CEO of PLDT & Smart, "As we listen and absorb the new rhythm of business, let's keep in mind that this is exactly what tonight is meant to symbolize: a truly exciting new beginning." For inquiries on SWUP, please call the PLDT SWUP hotline at 177 / 874-7474.

ce number.

A SWUP Lady demonstrates to Kirby Hartigan-Go of Abacus the wireless credit and debit card terminal.

L-R: PLDT and Smart President & CEO, Napoleon "Polly" Nazareno, SVP and Head of Corporate Business Group, Eric Alberto with CICT Commissioner, Ramon Sales.

L-R: Beth Tria and Carol Chua of Banco San Juan.

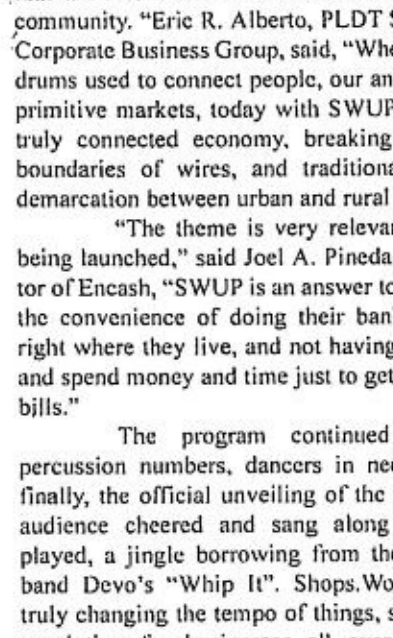
L-R: Leo Capinpin and Ernie Batungbacal of IBM Philippines.

L-R: Carlo Orosa, Leah Reyes, major raffle prize winner Anne Palmares of CCA, SVP and Head of Corporate Business Group Eric Alberto, Champaigne Morales, and Ariel Ureta.

L-R: Kat Luna-Abelarde of PLDT with Louie Rodriguez, CIO of Philam Savings Bank.

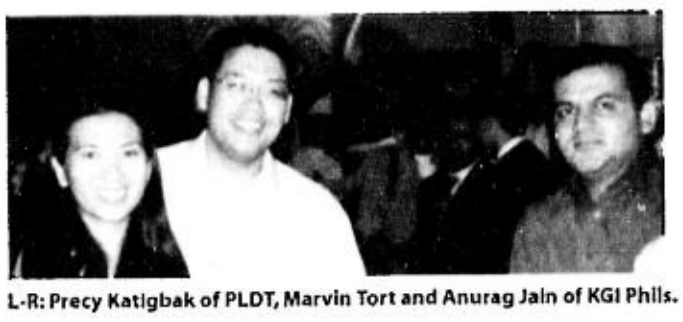
PLDT's Vic Tria giving the thumbs up for the wireless ATM powered by SWUP.

Bobby Claudio of Toby's Sports and Hobbies having a drink with PLDT and Smart President and CEO Napoleon "Polly" Nazareno.



join the hosts as they do the "SWUP!"

L-R: Leah Reyes, Champaigne Morales, Carlo Orosa, minor raffle prize winners Francisco Caparas of Asia United Bank and Lito Kagapan of Phil. Dealing & Exchange Corp, PLDT's FVP and Head of Corporate Business Solutions, Nerissa Ramos, and Ariel Ureta.



L-R: Precy Katigbak of PLDT, Marvin Tort and Anurag Jain of KGI Phils.

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Sunday BIZ

Candles light up two Tarlac families' lives

THE MARTINEZ family recycles melted wax collected from cemeteries to produce sturdy and functional pillar and votive candles for mass market.

Text & photos by Russell Arador
PDI Central Luzon Desk

TARLAC CITY—TWO ENtrepreneurial families in Tarlac City share a common passion for candle making. And their lives have improved financially from this.

But their similarities end there.

While the husband and wife team of Randy and Ana Marie Tabamo create artistically designed and custom made candles for the middle to high-end market; Roberto Martinez and wife Liberty, prefer to recycle melted wax collected from cemeteries around the city into functional and sturdy candles for the mass market.

And while Randy, a 36-year-old architect, sees candle making as an art form, Roberto, a former employee of the Department of Agriculture, believes that producing candles from waste is an opportunity to help save the environment.

ARCHITECT Randy Tabamo believes that candle making is an art form.

Skills training

The idea to put up Angelo's Lights and Crafts came last July after the Tabamo couple attended a skills training sponsored by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI). The business was named after their eldest child.

They went the rounds of several candle stores in different SM malls in Central Luzon and Metro Manila to survey the business landscape. They also interviewed owners of enterprises that use candles in their own products. The Tabamos learned that the supply of candles came mostly from Pampanga and Zambales.

In order to finance the acquisition of the required equipment and raw materials, they needed money, which, came in August. It was Ana Marie's share of her father's death benefits from the Social Security System (SSS).

"It was my father's last gift to me and, while the temptation to use it to pay off our debts was strong, I didn't want the money to simply disappear. Hence the decision to invest it in the candle business," Ana Marie said.

In October, the couple began making candles and experimenting with techniques.

Randy fabricated molds from thick cartons instead of metal to reduce cost. To their delight, they discovered that cartons, too, could withstand the very hot temperature of liquefied paraffin.

For designs, they browsed through illustrated magazines and books. It was through this method that they stumbled upon the Chinese yin and yang symbol, which turned out to be a best-seller in trade fairs.

The couple's yin and yang candles caught the fancy of buyers in a product exhibit held in December. Although the candles sold for P400 apiece, these were bought and more orders were placed.

Yet they merely broke even. They realized they sold the candles too cheap—they had no idea about costing at that time. Later, they learned that the yin and yang candles, weighing more than a kilogram each, could have been sold at P850 apiece.

Three other lessons they learned in trade fairs: Buyers prefer larger items, they want these to be sold in sets and they hate black, even if the color is elegant in candles.

Their initial batch of yin and yang candles were in black-and-white and brown-and-white colors.

The brown-and-white candles were sold out while the black-and-white ones were ignored.

"Nobody wants to light a black candle," a trade fair visitor told them.

The Tabamos also cite the importance of establishing ties with other enterprises and entrepreneurs.

In their case, they profited from their friendship with a woodcraft company owner whose wooden candleholders, for example, carried Angelo's candles.

They also began a harmonious business relationship with an entrepreneur in Isabela who produces fossilized leaves to decorate their candles.

Randy says the candle making business still allows him time to pursue his career as an architect.

To "cook" the paraffin, to add dye for color and fragrance oil for scent, and to pour the melted wax into molds of various shapes and sizes take only about two hours each day. The rest of the day, he says, he simply waits for the wax to harden by going about his other activities.

When the wax hardens, he drills holes into them to insert the wick.

Putting the wick in place, he says, "is like planting rice seedlings, only much easier."

Less than a year after they started making candles, the Tabamo family is already looking at the export market for their products. Towards this aim, they are starting to research alternatives to paraffin, as preferred by some countries. Canada, for example, prefers candles made from palm and vegetable wax.

Recycling

Roberto Martinez, 45, loves recycling waste materials into something useful.

Draped across windows in his house, for instance, are curtains made of juice packs stapled together. It therefore came as no surprise when he decided to go into candle making, using melted candles collected from cemeteries.

Roberto and his wife Liberty put up the Matibay Candles in February 2004 to help reduce the amount of wax waste generated during the celebration of All Souls' and All Saints' Days.

Last year alone, they bought 2,400 kg of wax waste at P8 to P10 a kg. They grossed a little under P100,000.

Because melted wax is cheaper than paraffin, which costs about P2,400 a sack, the Martinez couple was able to reduce the price of their products drastically.

Candles selling P30 apiece in the market are sold by the couple for less than P15. Also, they sell candles normally priced at P52 for P18.

But since they are using recycled wax, they could not control the color of the candles they produce, which usually come out dark red.

"Our candles are not intended as decor," Roberto says.

At any rate, he says, Matibay candles are, true to their name, "sturdy, functional and long-lasting."

They also sell their candles at 10 percent discount if purchased in bulk.

So how did the business improve the Martinez family economically?

Aside from more income (it topped Roberto's P231,000 per annum salary at the DA), candle making also provided people with jobs, including his brother.

And like the Tabamo couple, candle making affords the Martinezes enough time to go into other revenue-generating activities, like Roberto's videoke rental business.

Still, Roberto has other tricks up his sleeve.

His "candle refilling station," also at home, is now in business. The concept is unique and promising because for P1 one can have his candleholder refilled with a gram of candle.

"This is really for the common people)," he says.

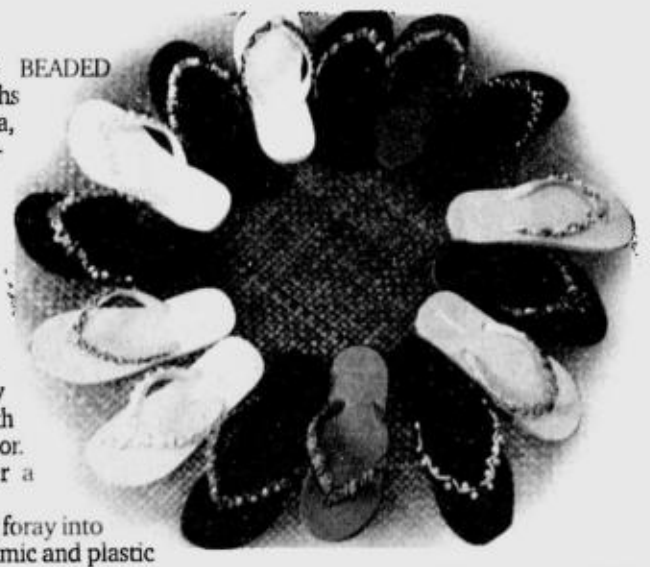
Slipping into a comfy venture on the ground

By Juan V. Sarmiento Jr.

LEGAZPI CITY—DESIGNING BEADED slippers started seven months ago as a hobby for Jin Moraleda, a former international flight attendant from Naga City, married to a surgeon here.

Today, it has turned into a business, launching her second career as an entrepreneur.

Since November, she has sold about 800 pairs of beaded rubber slippers without any advertising. "I started with P30,000 for materials and labor. I recouped the amount after a month," she says.



She acknowledges that her foray into sprucing up slippers with ceramic and plastic beads, wood chips, and shells has become more than a leisure activity. It is now a business—including tension and stress.

"Sometimes, I hardly sleep just to meet orders, like coming up with 50 pairs in two days last Holy Week alone," says Jin, mother of a two-year-old boy.

But the fact that people are buying the slippers with her designs gives her satisfaction.

Artistically inclined

Bent on having a formal training in interior design, Jin, a nursing graduate, plans to take up a course offered on the Internet by a London-based school.

For 11 years until 2003, Jin was a flight attendant of Philippine Airlines. She got married in 2002 and resigned when she got pregnant.

She told herself then that she needed to do something if she stopped flying.

It was her mother-in-law, Corazon, and sisters-in-law Mia, Nonette and Geri who inspired Jin to pursue her interest in designing beaded slippers.

Her trips abroad exposed her to different cultures and enriched her creativity which she now applies to her designs.

JIN Moraled

Marilyn Monroe

She has so far come up with 60 designs. The elaborately designed slippers have names like Marilyn Monroe, Rainbow Hearts, Las Vegas, Aurora.

They carry the brand name "Albayanas," (from Albay), a pun on "Havaianas," the popular Brazilian slippers selling for P800 to P1,000 a pair. "The catchy brand name was my sister's idea," Jin says.

The wholesale price of Albayanas is P230 a pair.

Jin says she got her artistic bent from her mother, Betty Lomibao Padillo, who used to create gowns for her daughters.

Last Christmas, a doctor ordered nine pairs. Others followed. "Many bought my products, especially at the beach," she says.

For men, too

She sold in her husband's family's rest house in Barangay Sogod in Bacacay, Albay.

"I sold 60 pairs at the beach to friends and family members," Jin says. The buyers were tourists from Manila, who knew that beaded slippers were in vogue.

Her first line of beaded slippers was for women and girls. In April, she introduced a line for men—Buskay and Yin-Yang. "The first 10 pairs brought to Manila were sold out," Jin says.

Albayanas has found an outlet at the Glorietta mall in Makati and one in Baguio.

New lines

She employs 12 workers—all out-of-school youth teenagers. "I found out that male teenagers could produce better than the housewives I first hired," she says. One worker can finish five to six pairs a day.

Word about Albayanas has spread overseas. Jin received an inquiry from a Filipino in Sydney on how he could sell Albayanas in Australia.

As her business thrives, Jin is expanding her line of products. She is going into slippers with heels and bags.

She concentrates on production, while her sisters-in-law do the marketing in Manila.

Passing vehicles inspire dropout in Benguet to entrepreneurship

By Delmar Cariño
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

ATOK, BENGUET—MARION CODEO is a college dropout but his fascination with trucks and buses has made him into a budding entrepreneur.

What started a few years ago as a hobby for Codeo turned out to be a real passion today—that of making miniature replicas or models of all vehicles that pass through Halsema Highway here.

Halsema, more popularly known as Mountain Trail, is Northern Luzon's most grueling road. The highway spans 84 km of steep and winding mountainside route from La Trinidad town to Barangay Abatan in Buguias town.

Since 2002, Codeo, 24, has made more than 300 models of buses, trucks, jeepneys, vans and cars that passed the highway.

He sold these for P700 to P800 each, making him a breadwinner of his family in Barangay Calasipan here.

This summer alone, Codeo, a bachelor and second in a family of eight, sold 21 models.

He also finished 30 units of various types of vehicles ordered by a soft drink dealer in Buguias town. Codeo says the dealer had told him he would resell the pieces at P1,500 each.

By next month, Codea says he has to complete five models of a Ford Fiera ordered by a customer.

He says some of his models were taken abroad last year when a *balikbayan* from Mountain Province bought five and took them to the United States.

Codeo's house is found on an elevated area along a curve of Halsema Highway fronting the Calasipan Elementary School at Km. 60 here.

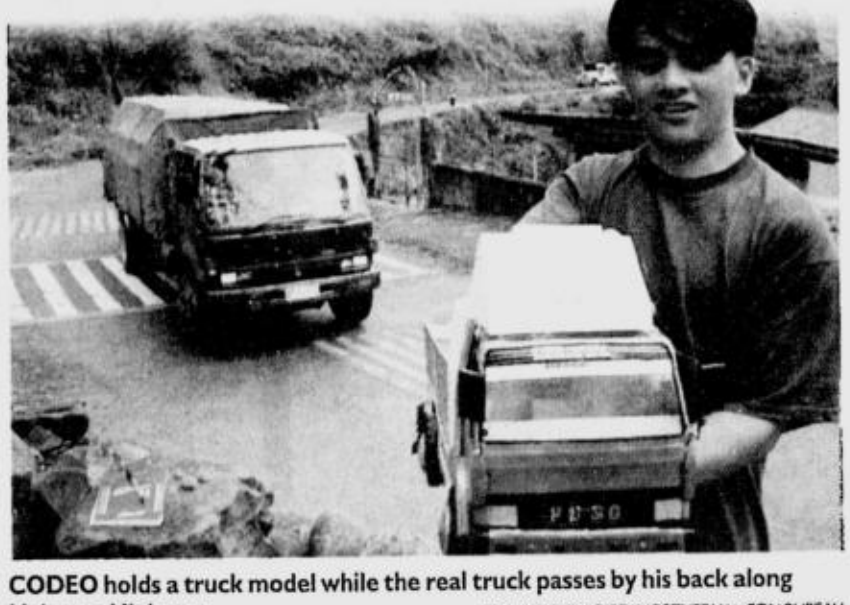
The house has a yard where Codeo could conveniently view all passing vehicles.

Since most trucks and buses travel back and forth, Codeo says the vehicles' images would stick to his mind.

"Sometimes, I take pictures of them," he says.

A row of rocks in the same yard serve as Codeo's display area of the models that would always catch the attention of commuters.

Codeo says he had no formal training to hone his skills.



CODEO holds a truck model while the real truck passes by his back along Halsema Highway.
DELMAR CARIÑO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

"I just like copying vehicles. I merely drew them before. Then I tried to make one model and I found it fulfilling," he says.

Codeo took civil engineering at the University of the Cordilleras in Baguio City but dropped out on his third year. He then shifted to an agriculture course at the Benguet State University in La Trinidad town but left school after a year.

He says since going to school did not interest him, he returned to his hometown to help his parents tend their farm.

During his free time, Codeo would sketch trucks passing along Halsema. Later, he thought of making models of these vehicles.

Today, almost every bus company that passed by Codeo's house had placed an order for a unit or two of their vehicles' replica.

Among the bus companies that ply the route are the Rising Sun, Lizardo Trans, Dangwa Tranco, Sumadel Bus Lines and GL Trans. These buses reach as far as Bontoc and Sagada towns in Mt. Province.

He had also made replicas of vegetable trucks and commuter.

Codeo could perfectly copy the vehicles—from the bumper and steering wheel to the chassis and body paint.

"He has really helped his brothers and sisters go to school. I myself was amazed how he slowly developed his skill to make models," Luis, Codeo's father, says.

"He may not be studying but his earnings had augmented our meager income [from farming]," Teodora, his mother, says.

She says the attention her son is now receiving had made them uneasy because they are a typically quiet family.

Mayor Concepcion Balao says the local government is willing to help Codeo make his pasttime a serious business.

"He could ask the town council or the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) for financial assistance," Balao says.

She says she would ask the town council to pass a resolution recognizing Codeo's rare achievement.

Codeo's creations, the mayor says, were cited during the province's Adivay festival in La Trinidad town in February last year.

Codeo says he uses mostly tin scrap and used wires as his raw materials. He, however, buys paint and thin galvanized iron sheets for the body of his models.

The tires, he says, are actually alnus tree branches that fall on the ground. He carves them into tires and paint them black.

The hub caps are taken from the bottom of discarded soda cans while the windshields are from discarded plastic containers, he says.

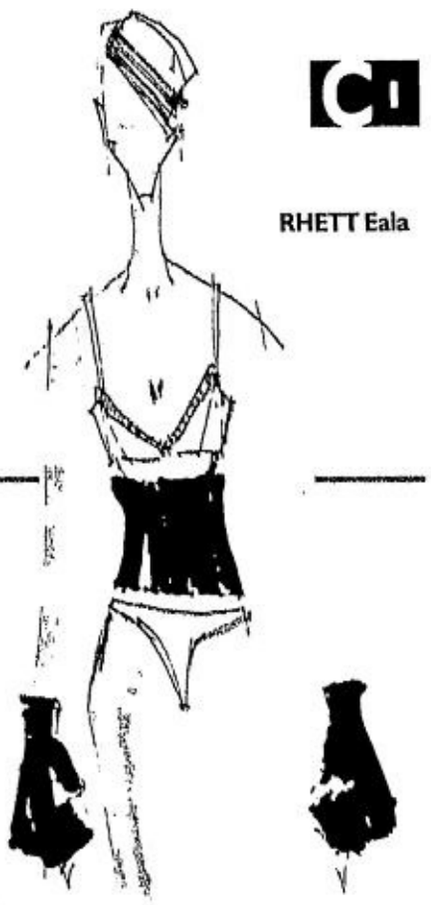
"Just give me pictures of all angles of a [vehicle], and I can make its model," Codeo says.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Sunday LIFESTYLE

Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

edback: inquirer life name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 386 (Smart) or email us at lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph



Boogie nights

Bench's underwear show pays tribute to the disco era

By Alex Y. Vergara

WITH THE COUNTDOWN to "Bench Fever" less than three weeks away, the fashion designers and stylists behind the show are anxiously putting the finishing touches to their segments in the show.

"Bench Fever" is, of course, the underwear extravaganza and denim show mounted every other year by leading local fashion label Bench. Well, 2006 being "that other year," the much-awaited show is slated for June 30 at the Araneta Coliseum in Cubao, QC.

As in past shows, there will be plenty of scantily clad celebrities and models who will raise the voyeuristic public's temperature.

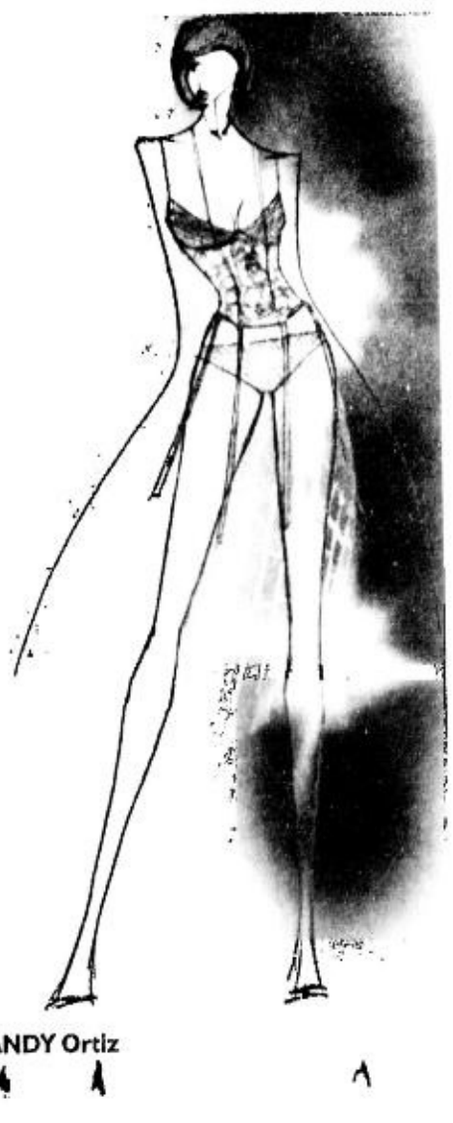
For the first time, however, the country's leading RTW brand is tapping a gaggle of creative souls to style various looks inspired by the disco era—from "Saturday Night Fever" and Studio 54 to Olivia Newton John's "Physical" and Madonna's "Confessions on a Dance Floor."

Bench used to hire a group of low-profile but creative stylists to do the show. But not anymore. For the first time, too, Robby Carmona will be sitting on the director's chair once occupied by Ariel Lozada.

Among the designers who'll spice up the show are Rajo Laurel, Randy Ortiz and Rhett Eala. Besides the 3R's, Joey Samson and Shanghai-based Patrice Ramos-Diaz have also reportedly signed up, as have a few other fashionistas.

BOOGIE/ C2

RUFA Mae Quinto, one of sexy disco belles



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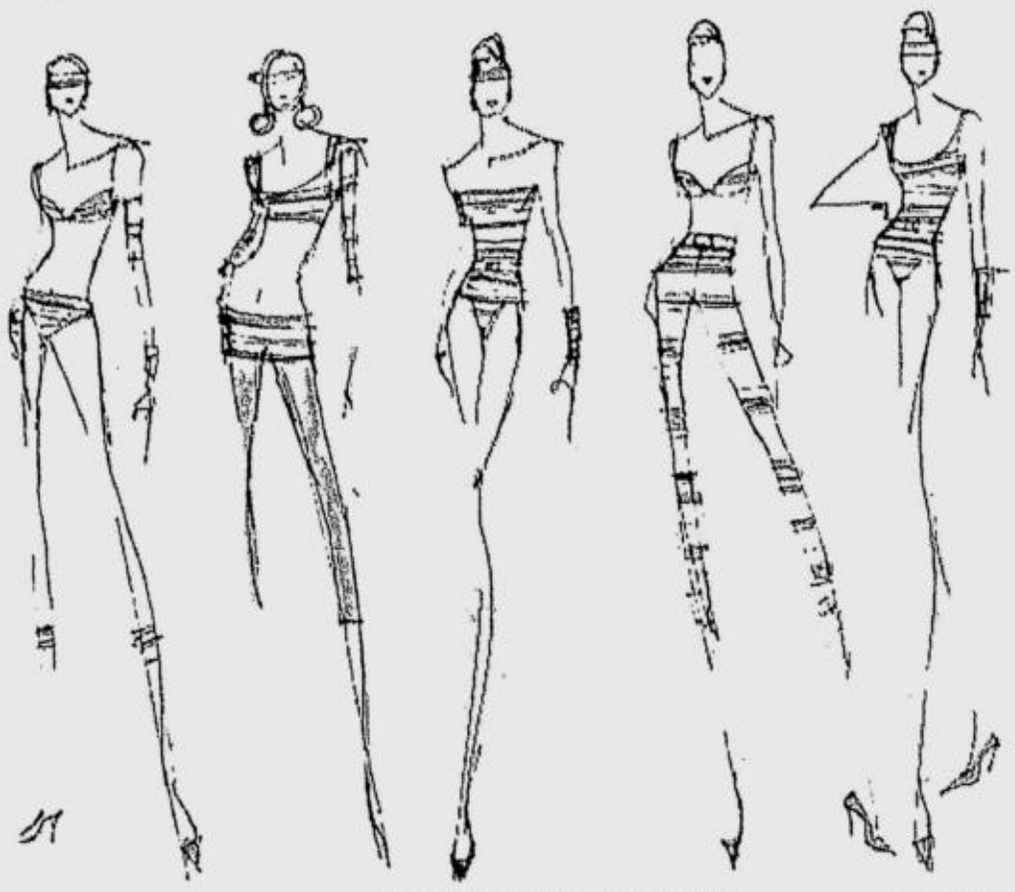
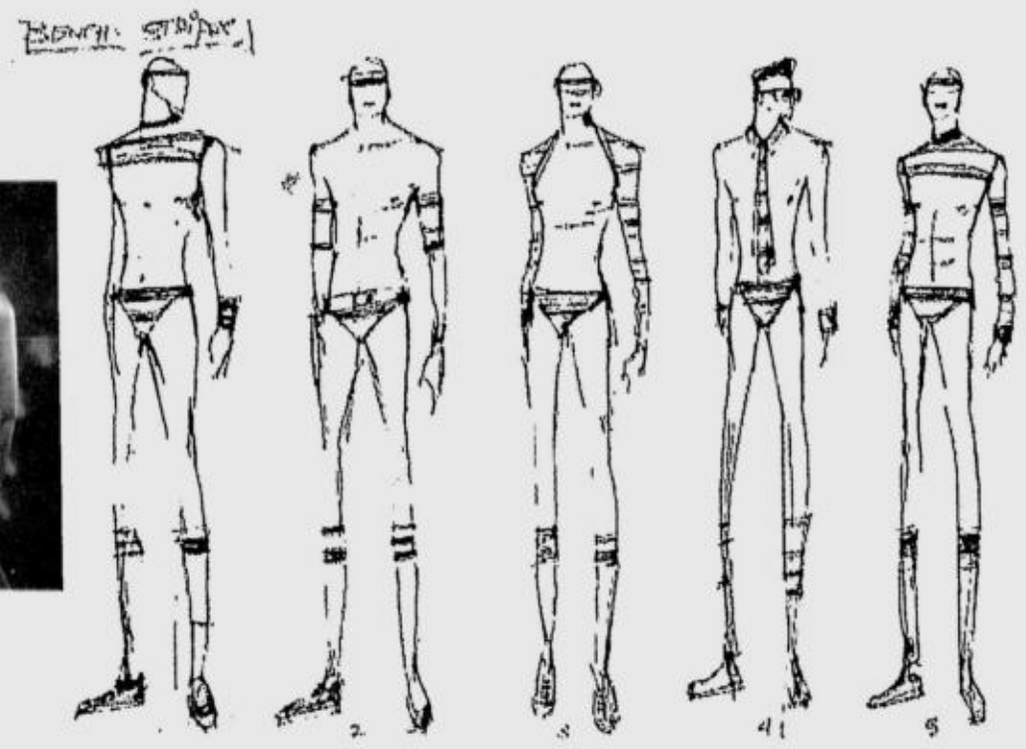


BIANCA King



RAJO Laurel's kitschy suite is themed on stripes and getting physical.

Boogie nights

From page C1

Laurel, a self-confessed child of the '80s, is paying tribute to the gung-ho decade with a suite inspired by the movie, "Bagets," with references to Newton John's "Physical" music video.

"It's a kitschy representation of what I remember," says Laurel. "I grew up during the decade so it's very close to home."

Since the collection's theme is stripes (lots of 'em), the designer is using it as a main design element. As if a parade of movie stars in their undies isn't racy enough, he's also drawing images from videos of porn stars in the early '80s.

"The collection's focus is obviously the underwear, so you'll see tons of sexy, sensual elements," Laurel says.

FRANCINE Prieto

RANDY Ortiz

ZANJOE Marudo

Edgy

Eala promises to be more edgy as he derives inspiration from such dark references as the movie "The Fight Club," and the punk movement.

"Of course," he says, "the evening won't be complete without me channeling Madonna in her various reincarnations as the ultimate dance diva."

To realize his vision, the designer is using an all-black arsenal of accessories and materials, such as raw silk, chiffon, leather and the de rigueur metal crosses. We won't be surprised, though, if he makes use of chains, whips and spiked leather knuckles to bolster the segment's S&M feel.

"Well, I guess you can call my segment 'The Dark Days of Disco,'" says Eala, with a knowing smile.

Disco daze

Ortiz will be heavily drawing references from the early '60s and early '70s, such as colorful Pucci-like prints.

For more sparkle, he incorporates deconstructed necklaces, waistbands, cuffs, collars and plackets with disco beading akin to the ubiquitous disco ball. His suite will begin and end with such trademark '70s pop ditties as Diana Ross' "The Boss" and Donna Summer's "Last Dance."

"I came of age during this period," says Ortiz, with a chuckle. "It was a time when young people would go to Where Else? and party all night long."

On top of using a riot of colors and glitter, the designer promises to show plenty of skin. In one portion, for instance, female models will parade with nothing but long, colored wigs to cover their upper bodies.

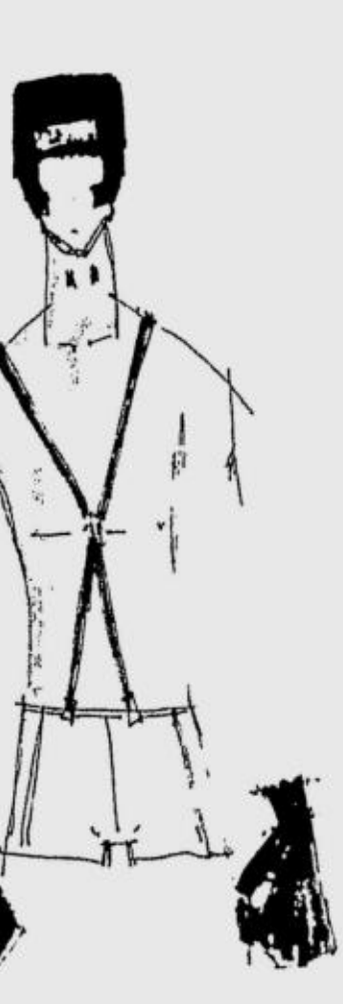
To keep in tune with the retro theme, a number of girls and boys will be sporting wigs à la Twiggy and Beatles-meets-Andy Warhol, respectively.

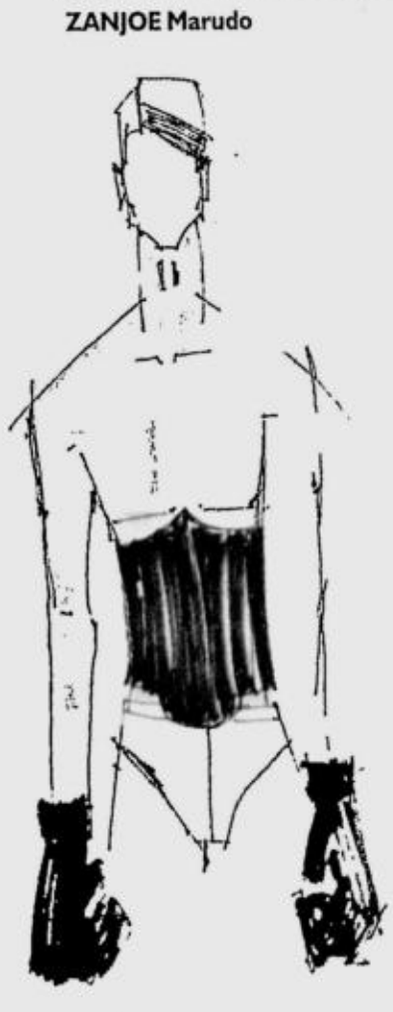
Ortiz will also pay tribute to the Chippendales, America's hotly popular group of male striptease performers, by fitting the Pinoy guys who will be strutting their stuff on stage with mirror-studded collars, plackets and cuffs.

All in all, another sizzling and dazzling show to expect from Bench.

RANDY Ortiz mixes skin with glitter.

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph





RAFAEL Rosell

RHETT Eala goes for disco noir, with all-black, leather and metal.

BOLD abstract artist Ivan Acuña and BMW girl Leana Farrales

MOVING TV host Cito Beltran and Thelina Nuval

PRETTY ladies Ana Sia and Vicky Castañeda with Acuña background

COMEDIAN dad Dolphy with daughter Zia Quizon

SPECIAL guests Sandy and Philip Romualdez

SLIMMER mega star Sharon Cuneta

A yoga-guided, purpose-driven life

From page C4

the destination but the journey one takes to attain those poses. I guess that is so true with life in general. It's the journey and the people we meet and positively touch each day that count.

Impressive silver anniversary

I thought about this as I watched the impressive video presentation of the 25 years of First Pacific at their grand silver anniversary celebration at the newly opened Four Seasons Hotel in Hong Kong. It has indeed been a tough but successful journey for First Pacific CEO **Manny Pangilinan**, who is still in full-throttle mode as the company roars toward its next 25 years.

I had my 15 minutes of airtime in a brief conversation with MVP after the party. He told me about how he weathered a storm that almost ended his partnership with the majority owners, the Salim family, but instead converted this challenge into making First Pacific one of the most flourishing corporations in Asia.

I believe MVP is blessed with good karma, not only from his business success but also from the many charitable projects he has supported over the years, one of which is the Assumption Mission Schools that my high-school batch has also been supporting.

In one of the most impressive musical productions I have ever seen, First Pacific's 25th anniversary party presented the finest of Filipino talents including Las Vegas performers **Martin Nievera** and my fave diva, **Lani Misalucha**, who is thoroughly missed in Manila's entertainment scene.

Lani is now Las Vegas' newest star, headlining regularly at the Bally's Hotel and Casino, and we wish her continued standing-room-only performances. After singing the very difficult opera number "Nessun Dorma" from Act 3 of Turandot, the international audience of corporate giants from around the world gave her a standing ovation.

MVP himself handpicked the entire repertoire as he worked with music genius **Louie Ocampo** on the musical direction of the gala concert. The powerhouse cast had solo, duet and group performances blending so well. Imagine divas like **Zsa Zsa Padilla** and **Kuh Ledesma** singing along with crooner **Christian Bautista**—and their voices didn't musically "kill" each other on stage! A beautiful duet by Smart endorser Martin Nievera and the new, slimmer mega star **Sharon Cuneta** enthralled everyone that evening.

With a gastronomic feast and an enchanted evening of song and dance, First Pacific's night of thanksgiving and celebration was surely a very memorable show. All the guests stayed until the end, which rarely happens in Hong Kong parties.

BMW Philippines CEO Joerg Breuer, Tom Zita and Tertius Vermeulen

BRILLIANT minds PDI chair Marixi Prieto, First Pacific chair Anthoni Salem and FP CEO Manny Pangilinan

ART lovers Louie and Mellie Ablaza and Lilibeth Campos

Exclusive club

Arriving from Hong Kong a few days after the party, I arrived in a home full of BMW goodies from The Club 1 Party at Embassy. This exclusive drivestyle "club" was created by BMW as part of a unique marketing strategy to introduce its 1 Series car to the driving public.

Club members got to try out the 1 Series in a week-long trial. I was lucky enough to be among the first batch of 123 Club 1 members, as BMW corporate communications manager **Leana Farrales** had invited me. Some of the prizes (HP notebook bag, Samsonite travel bag, CD sets from Sony BMG, Kérastase gift packs and gas cards from Petron) that I won were for my entertaining blog (check it out on www.club1-bmw.com.ph) and for providing the most photographs with my BMW 1 Series.

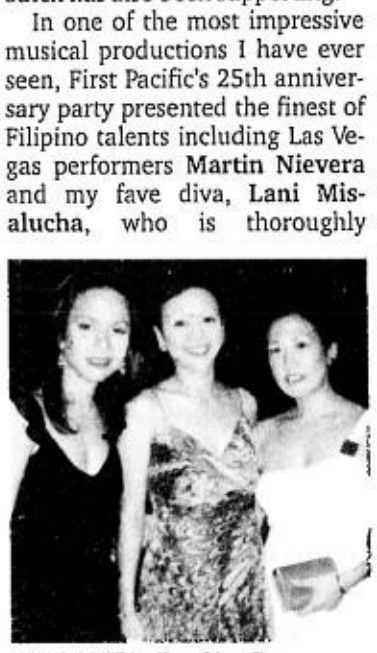
At a recent, intimate cocktail party at the residence of BMW Philippines' CEO, Dr. **Joerg Breuer**, car aficionados were exchanging stories about their 1 Series driving experiences. **Cito Beltran** talked to me about his passion for cars and his fondness for vintage models. I believe he even owns the oldest car in the Philippines, which still runs and even has some wooden parts.

Set up into a cozy lounge atmosphere, Dr. Breuer's home displayed the brilliant, abstract works of contemporary artist **Ivan Acuña**. This kind-hearted, colorful oil painter donated a giant artwork for a charity art auction last year and I recall the piece garnered one of the highest winning bids.

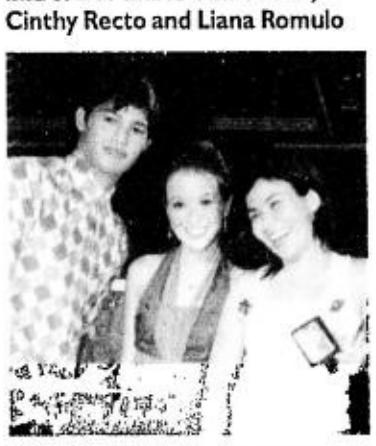
Exchanging ideas and just plain conversing with great minds can be so inspiring. Life is truly a continuous learning experience. It is very important to help uplift others' lives without expecting anything in return.

I wonder if these were my New Year's Resolutions? If not, they are good ones to make—even in June.

E-mail me at seaprincess@inquirer.com.ph.



ELEGANT ladies Gina Roxas, Cinthy Recto and Liana Romulo



CLUB 1 hosts Borgy Manotoc and Nicole Hernandez with Angel Rivero

PETRON Philippines CEO Khalid Al Faddagh between gas card winners Kai Santos and Leica Carpo

BMW marketing director Lito German toasting with Skyy Vodka between Elbert and Lisa Cuenca

I-MILER Awardee My Gana and Mylo Suarez

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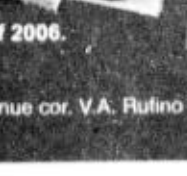

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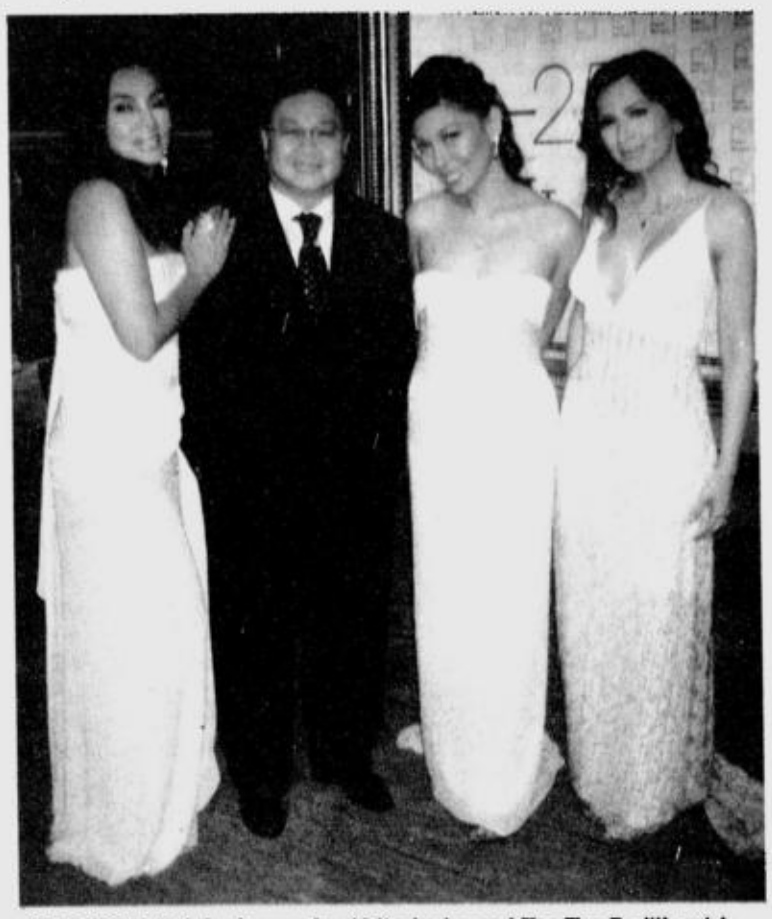
To help uplift the lives of others without expecting anything in return is a good New Year's resolution to make—even in June



ALL DIVAS. Kuh Ledesma, Lani Misalucha and Zsa Zsa Padilla with PLDT CEO Manny Pangilinan

A yoga-guided, purpose-driven life

TESSA!

Tessa Prieto-Valdes

AS THE MONTH OF JUNE—the midpoint of the year—kicks in, I wonder how many of my New Year's resolutions have been kept. Age must be creeping in because I seem to have difficulty remembering whether I even drew up a list, or if I bothered to mentally make any promises to myself.

You see, my Ashtanga yoga mentor, **Bela Lipat**, teaches her students to make daily affirmations of attainable goals, thus making each day more significant and fulfilling. Yearly promises usually remain mostly unresolved because there are just too many days in the year to stay focused on those issues.

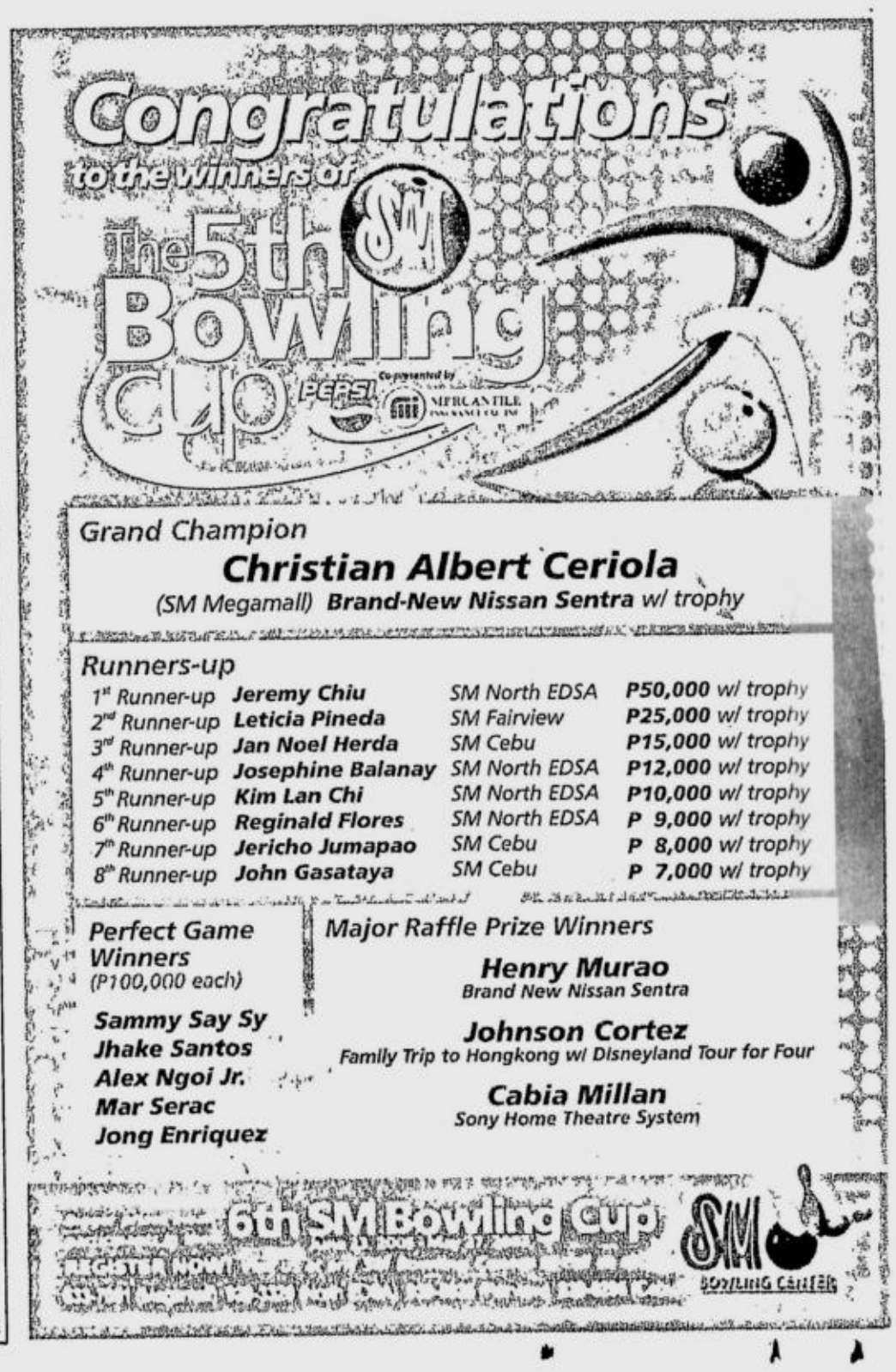
With that in mind, I have made it a practice to work on my daily purpose in life. Even if my current, new favorite form of yoga is Bikram (for classes at Bikram Yoga Manila, call Tristan Choa at 8891011 or visit www.bikramyogamanila.com), aka "hot" yoga, I still integrate the basic meditation practice of Ashtanga or power yoga into my lifestyle.

With hardly any meditation portion, Bikram, a series of yoga poses done in a room maintained at a heated temperature of 40°C, focuses mainly on weight reduction. The vigorous yoga session combined with the heat promotes profuse sweating that rids the body of toxins and provides instant gratification with a few kilos lost just after a few classes. Fashion designers like **Rajo Laurel** and **Rhett Eala** have been on the 30-day challenge at Bikram Yoga Manila and are both sporting slimmer, more toned figures.

During one of the intense Bikram classes, instructor **Cristina Stathis** told the class that in achieving the proper poses, it's not about

A YOGA/ C3

KLASSIK BMW dealers Severino Oliva, Mike Cua and Willy Tee Ten



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Spadework in your home

WHETHER IN THE form of a bag, a vase, or a pillow, accents define an individual's personality," says Kate Spade. "And what could be more personal than what someone puts in their home?"

LIBRARY striped votive and Beacon Street medium oval vase

The Kate Spade home accessories are manufactured by Lenox, the creator of the first American china used in the White House.

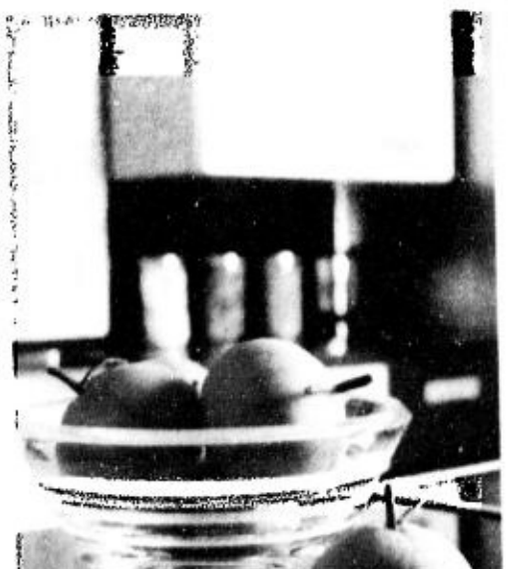
The Kate Spade Home Collection includes a line of crystal giftware such as rose bowls, vases and votives, and silver-plated gift pieces such as frames, candle holders and trays.

The vases are crafted from full lead crystal and glass; they range from 6-11 inches tall. The vases have very intricate designs, such as delicate etched patterns.

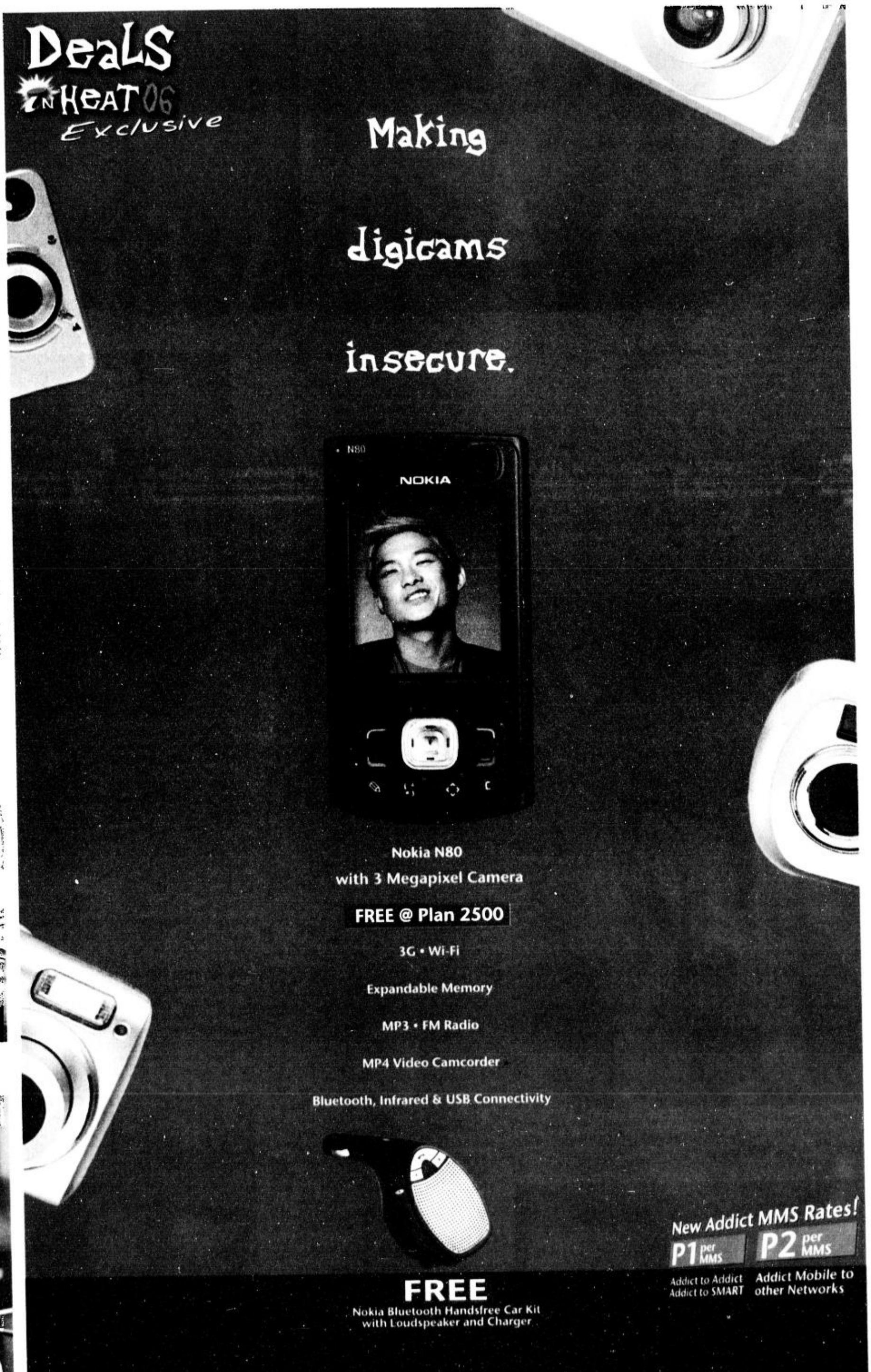
Kate Spade is exclusively distributed by Store Specialists Inc. at Greenbelt 3, Power Plant Mall and Shangri-La Plaza.

The pictorial was shot at the The Residences. Model units are available for viewing at the 3/L, Greenbelt 3. Call 7287000, or visit www.theresidencesatgreenbelt.com.

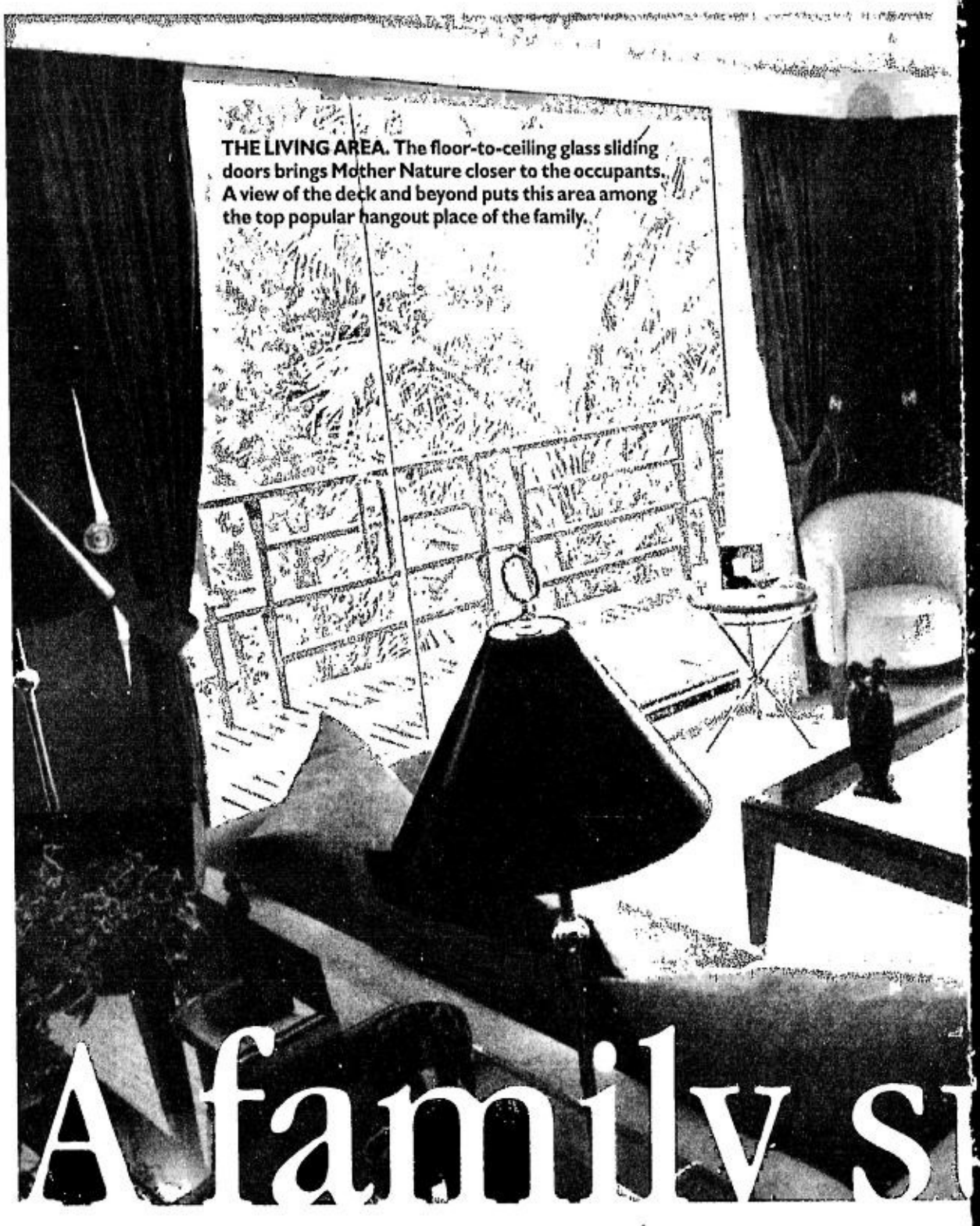
POMPANO Point candlestick and Larabee dot cylinder vase



LIBRARY striped bowl



THE ENTERTAINMENT DEN. Her husband's only request was for an entertainment console. Instead the entire first level was converted into a family room equipped with multimedia entertainment system.



THE LIVING AREA. The floor-to-ceiling glass sliding doors brings Mother Nature closer to the occupants. A view of the deck and beyond puts this area among the top popular hangout place of the family.

JUST AN ILLUSION. The mirror behind the sofa set creates an illusion of depth in the living area. The iron art repro of the Tres Marias, gold leaf candleholders, silver box and iron jar were sourced in New York. The crystal ashtrays are mere decor that add glitter to the room.

A family st at roa

Text by Anne A. Jambora
Photos by Edwin Bacasmas
Art direction by Dobie Aranda

THE ROAD BENDS AND wends along jagged slopes and thriving lush, goes past the guardhouses, through the tunnel, over the bridge. When it makes that final turn, however, a dull landscape of nondescript duplex homes once inhabited by US servicemen comes within sight.

Welcome to the former Subic naval base.

At the end of the road, an austere box of a house stands by itself, stripped of decadent opulence. Self-effacing almost, it seems to want to disappear into the woods that surround it. Ah, but like all things in life, what matters most is what is within.

Step inside and easily the temperature drops more than 10 degrees from the sultry air outside. A wool carpet of clean waffle pattern stretches wall to wall in a luxurious sprawl. All at once a distinct waft of elegance tickles the senses, an impression akin to walking into a five-star hotel room.

"I'm a hotel person. I love hotels. When we leased this place almost 10 years ago I specifically requested that it have that hotel-ish look and feel," said the graceful mistress of the house, who owns a chain of fashion boutiques in the metropolis. "Hotels give me the feeling that I'm on vacation," she said.

And a hotel mood is what the place exudes. Not an article is out of place, everything is concisely arranged to fit the constrained space and please the weary eye. They are, after all, organized to seamlessly blend into a 150-sq-m, two-story, three-bedroom home for a family of five who unwinds in this laidback neighborhood on weekends.

At first blush, the place seems too poised for a country home. But then again, the owner is not your typical person. This is, after all, a woman who wears MAC lipstick as casually as she carries around a Mac laptop.

Subtle details

It is, however, the subtle details and consistency that set this home apart from the humdrum. While the neutral colors from the furniture give it that polished, classic look, the dark earth tones on the wall succeed to warm up the space. Modern materials like chrome, glass and steel add spark and glitter and life to vacant corridors.

The owner was partial to glass and mirror because of the glitter they created, and the materials were trademarks often associated with her architect, J. Antonio Mendoza, a good friend she hired to rescue the house from its uninspired expression way back in 1997. They thought so alike Mendoza didn't need to present a blueprint, she said.

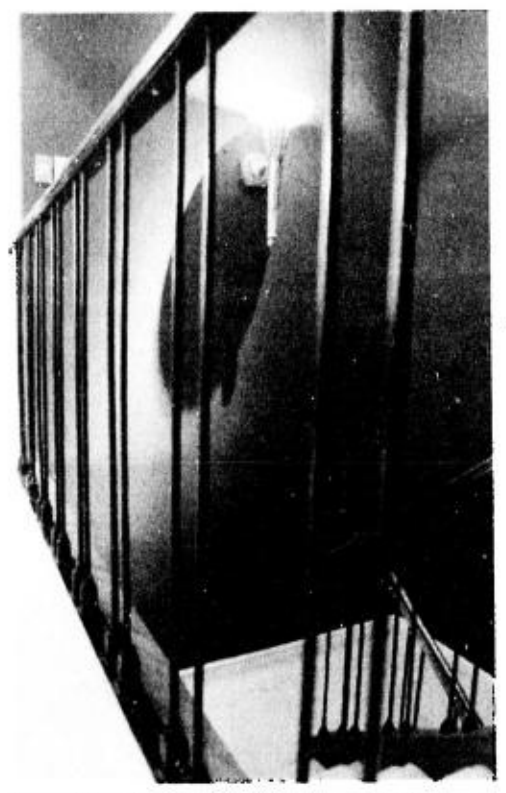
"The process took only a few weeks. He just drew it on paper and showed it to me. I knew exactly what he meant, and he knew instantly what I wanted. We had an incredible chemistry. Up to this day I am very pleased with what he has done," she said.

On his trip to New York, prior to the completion of his work, Mendoza bought many unique items for the Subic home—enough to fill up two large suitcases, in fact—without waiting for the owner's approval. Not that he was presumptuous, she quickly added. He just knew explicitly what her home sensibilities were.

It was not surprising then that she instantly fell in love with the house upon its completion and has never touched or moved a single object away from its original place. Never. Which really was not typical of her, she said. Coming from the fickle world of fashion, she naturally liked to experiment around the trends every so often. Not with this one though, she said.

The major facelift Mendoza executed was on the second floor. The house, built in the 1960s, bore standard-size windows. To gain space, he tore down the corner walls and replaced them with glass sliding doors constructed from the floor all the way to the ceiling. The result is a breathtaking panoramic view of the abundant foliage outside.

IN THEIR ELEMENTS. Modern and natural elements work in perfect chemistry. Note the Stephen Schlanser glass masterpiece that holds together the silver balls.



SOFT GLOW. "Allergic" to glare, lighting in the house is always indirect so the tones and hues are exquisitely restrained.

"I told him I wanted to bring the outside in. I want the living area to be breathable and airy. I just love this view," the owner said.

Mounting a floor-to-ceiling mirror up against one wall, directly facing the picturesque view of the sliding doors, also created a delightful optical illusion of space. To generate more glint and glimmer, glass is employed on many fixtures and articles of the house.

Shimmering effect

The eight-seater dining table, designed by Mendoza himself, is made of 3/4-inch-thick beveled glass in triple pencil pattern supported by wrought iron at the base. Coffee tables, console and side tables, with either iron or wooden base, are all made of the same material and pattern. A thinner glass would not have produced the same shimmering effect, she said.

Brass iron rails replaced the once dreary solid wood at the top of the stairs. The home, she said, was renovated in the '90s when gold and gold leaf were the trend. Although gold and metals are making a comeback today, the employment of the iron rails is consistent with her requirement for glitter.

In her kitchen, a mere 15 sq m, metal and wood are fused. Kitchen cabinets are wall-mounted, which allows for just enough room to erect an island. Ultra-sleek and avant-garde small appliances by Philippe Starck and Alessi speak of über modern kitchen magic. She doesn't cook, she said, but her school-aged daughters love to tinker in the kitchen.

A deck was constructed around a *kalachuchi* tree, accessible from the glass doors on the second floor and from the garden in the backyard. "We love grills and barbecues so this deck is actually the family's favorite next to the living area," she said.

There are no television sets in the children's rooms. To make space for a multimedia system, the first floor was converted into an entertainment den so the family can gather together to watch TV or movies, or play music. Otherwise, there is always the living room or the deck for real human interaction, said the mistress of the house.

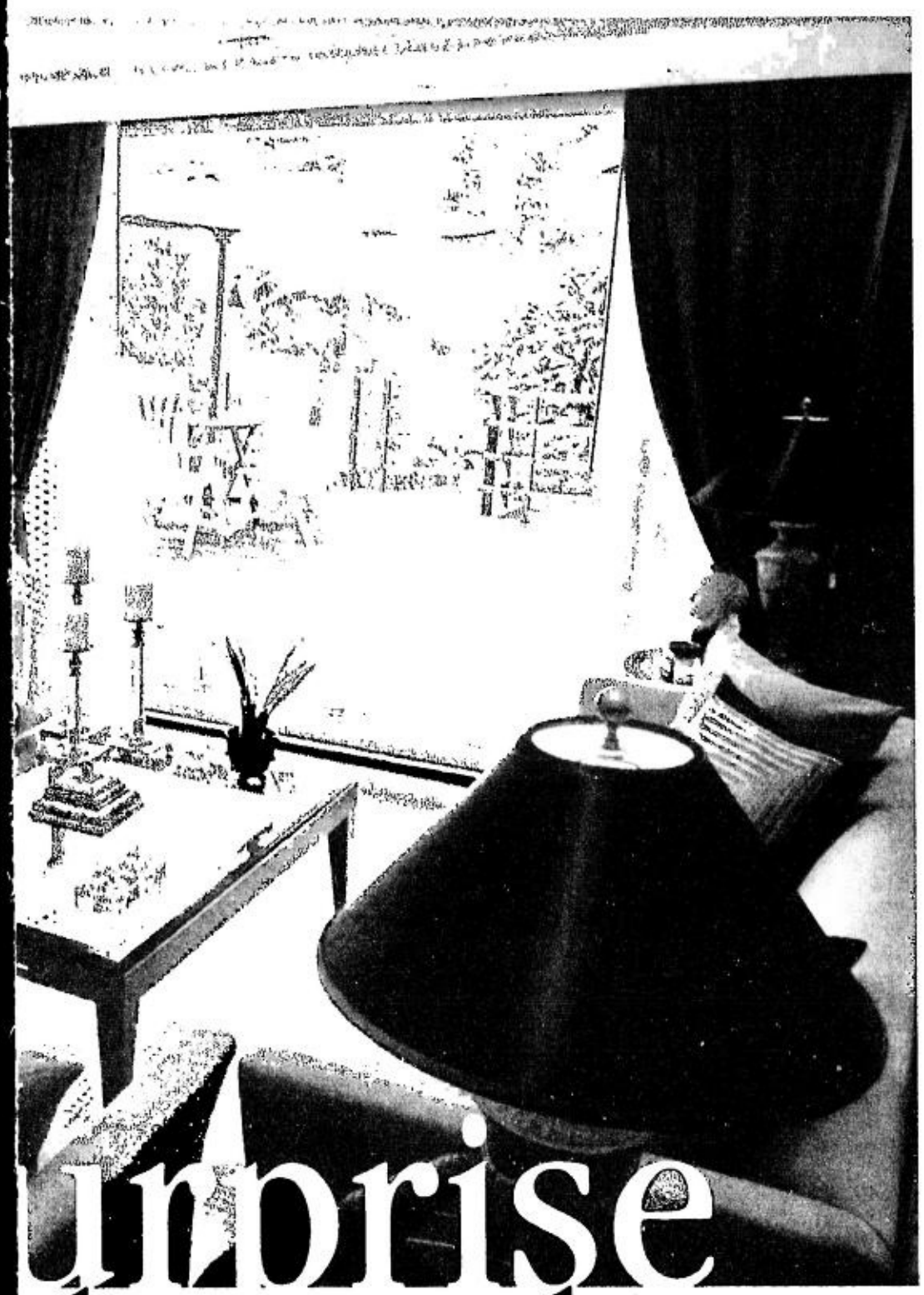
When Subic lost some of its lure to developers some years back, the family's visits to the weekend home became less regular. Today, however, with the son all grown up and now an engineer overseeing part of his work in this side of town, the family has once again been spending weekends here.

"A weekend home should be elegant and comfortable you wouldn't mind staying in all day long," said the owner. Not mention that it becomes something to look forward to all week long.

E-mail the author at ajambora@inquirer.com.ph

THE GIRLS' ROOM. A warm shade of peach, instead of popular request for pink, is the color motif of this room.

THE MASTER'S BEDROOM. Warmer furniture colors compliment the neutral tone of the room. The cabinet, locally sourced, is a delicate work of marquetry. A favorite article is the sunburst fish-eye mirror above the headboard.



mprise d's end

A nondescript boxlike structure from Subic's military past becomes an elegant hideaway

ALL THAT GLITTER IS NOT GOLD. Brass railing, glass tops, mirrors, bronze, gold leafs work together to bring that sparkle in this room.

CHEF'S DOMAIN. Interesting kitchen accessories and appliances such as the Philippe Starck juicer and Alessi kettle and vase gives this almost bare room a very sleek and stylish appeal.

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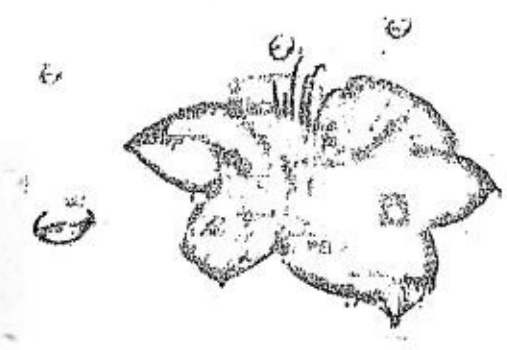

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A trail of faith paved by roses

Marian and other holy images suddenly appear on rose petals used in healing sessions in a Catholic shrine in Bulacan

Text and photos by Mandy Navasero

A SEASONED PHOTOJOURNALIST IS SAID to be born with a nose for news. But it's not unusual for the best among us to run against a wall sometimes or come across experiences that put us quite on the edge, between belief and disbelief.

Very recently, I drove through North Expressway and turned right to the Bocaue Exit. Before the bridge, I took a right turn to San José del Monte and traveled straight for about five kilometers. On the left side was a little road that led to the House of Prayer of the Mother of Eucharist and Grace, in Barangay San Vicente.

There, I met a man people called Bro. Carmelo Cortez, reportedly a Marian visionary. He is 37, a Bulacan diocesan awardee and a member of the Commission of Liturgists of the Diocese of Malolos under Bishop José Oliveros.

It was a First Saturday but I did not attach any significance to the day until I witnessed what some devout people may call a spiritual experience. I then took the opportunity to interview Cortez, who spoke in fluent Tagalog, as I searched for a better understanding of the experience I went through.

Cortez said his youth was not spectacular or eventful. He had regular stints as an altar boy at the San Pedro Bautista Shrine and Santo Domingo Church.

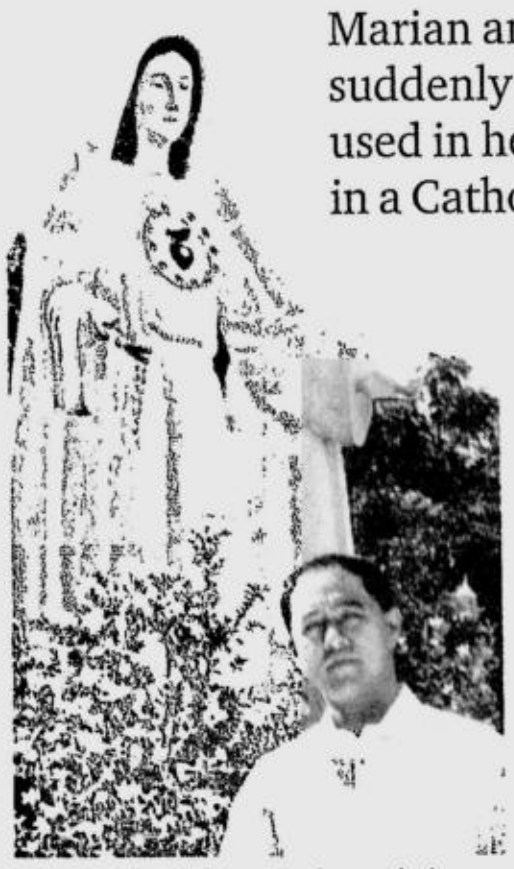
Except that on the morning of June 12, 1991, at precisely 3 o'clock, when he was only 21, Carmelo encountered a wonderful experience that would send him on a trail to deeper faith. The experience could not be described here. Suffice it to say that the spiritual voyage has always been accompanied by the scent of roses.

His mother, Cornelia Cortez, 75 and an Ulirang Ina awardee in 2004, has been his ardent supporter. He has also been followed by a growing legion of devotees who flock to the chapel, particularly on First Saturdays, a day devoted to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Carmelo's devotion to the Blessed Mother, whom he and the devotees would call the Mother of Eucharist and Grace, culminated in the construction of the House of Prayer of the Mother of Eucharist and Grace, whose groundbreaking was made by then Bulacan Bishop Rolando Tirona and, much later, consecrated on June 12, 2005, by Bishop Oliveros. The House of Prayer is an unpretentious but tastefully decorated structure, strikingly grand in its simplicity.

Mother of sacraments

As I entered the House of Prayer, the first thing that struck me was the panoramic glass window, which serves as the back wall. Beyond this window stands the statue of the Mother of Eucharist and Grace, her arms outstretched. On her right hand hangs the rosary, and on her left is the brown cloth scapular of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel.



BRO. CARMELO Cortez had a mystical encounter with the Blessed Mother.

The gaze of the towering virgin rests on the grand altar that is centered on the sanctuary. Bro. Carmelo explained that this is designed in that manner because the Mother of Eucharist and Grace invites all Catholics back to the sacraments of the Holy Eucharists and Reconcilliation. He urged people to pray for our country and for the sanctification of priests.

It was refreshing to sit in the chapel, deep in thought, communing with oneself or with God.

First Saturdays are when people gather as early as 8 a.m. for the holy Mass that starts at 11:30 a.m. The Mass I attended that Saturday was officiated by Fr. Rodel Ponce.

Right after Mass, the healing service of Bro. Carmelo started. He would lay hand on people and anoint rose oil on their foreheads and on the palms of their hands.

IMMACULATE Conception. Kneeling is Bernadette Soubirous, Lady of Fatima, Lucia, Jacinta and Franc

Like the devotees, we had brought our own roses. Bro. Carmelo laid his hand on our heads one by one. As he did to the others, he also put rose petals on my chest and incredibly, sacred icons immediately appeared on these petals.

I could hear different expressions of awe and amazement as the people left the chapel. I was lost in my own thoughts.

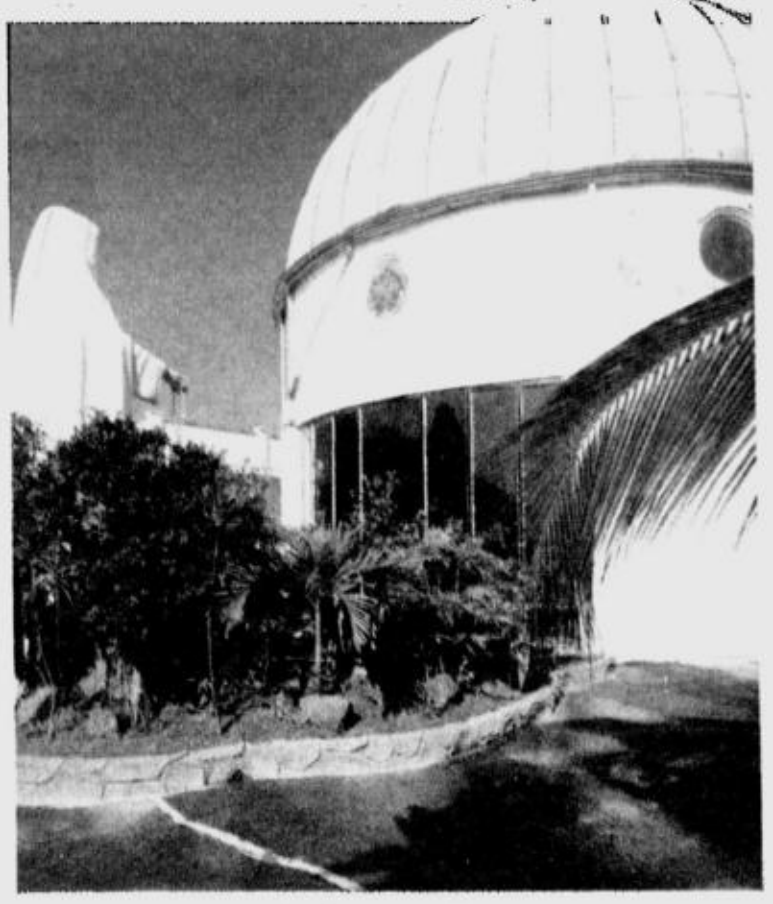
"Is this true?" I kept asking myself aloud. As a photojournalist, I am supposed to be detached from events and personalities. I searched for proofs. I had recorded the experience with my camera. How could it have happened, those icons in the fresh rose petals? I have no explanation. It must be God's way of healing me or touching my heart. I kept the petals pressed inside a tiny prayer book.

Afterwards, I looked at them against the light. I saw images of what looked like Padre Pio, the Pieta, the Blessed Mother and Baby Jesus, and St. Therese de Lisseux.

Conversion

Bro. Carmelo explained, "More important than the petals is the inner conversion and foregiveness that will start the healing."

I left the site feeling moved by the depth of the devotees' faith. Among them was a cancer survivor of more than a year, Belen Viola Lopez, 64, a retired guidance counselor from Hope Christian School. She had undergone chemotherapy and spent a month in the ICU and was told by doctors she had only a few months to live. But after going to the Bulacan shrine and having healing sessions with Bro. Carmelo, she believes she has been on remission from cancer for over a year now.



HOUSE of Prayer

CANCER survivor Belen Viola Lopez, a devotee

Teresita Domigpe of Meycauayan, 34, was seriously ill at the Heart Center. She was told an infection had spread to her kidneys and was close to affecting her brains. Doctors had given her 48 hours to live. But she has survived. Bro. Carmelo visited her in the ICU and soon after, she recovered.

The Mother of Eucharist and Grace Foundation has been set up to administer to and maintain the House of Prayer. The foundation has donated the House of Prayer to the Roman Catholic Bishop of Malolos.

Every one is invited to visit the House of Prayer, especially on First Saturdays. The Healing Mass starts at 11:30 a.m. and the healing services by Bro. Carmelo follows right after. The House of Prayer/Museum is open 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

There is also a First Friday Holy Mass at 4 p.m. and regular Sunday Masses at 10 a.m.

The Mother of Eucharist and Grace community is celebrating its 15th anniversary on June 12. Mass will be held at 12 noon at the House of Prayer. It will be concelebrated by Bishops Oliveros, Cirilo Almario and Ruben Profugo.

For inquiries on schedule of healing services, call or text 0906-4972763.

Text

For feedback, e-mail us at lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph

YLE

207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

The Fashion Czar of Asia is once more off to the US capital to showcase a dazzling 120-piece collection

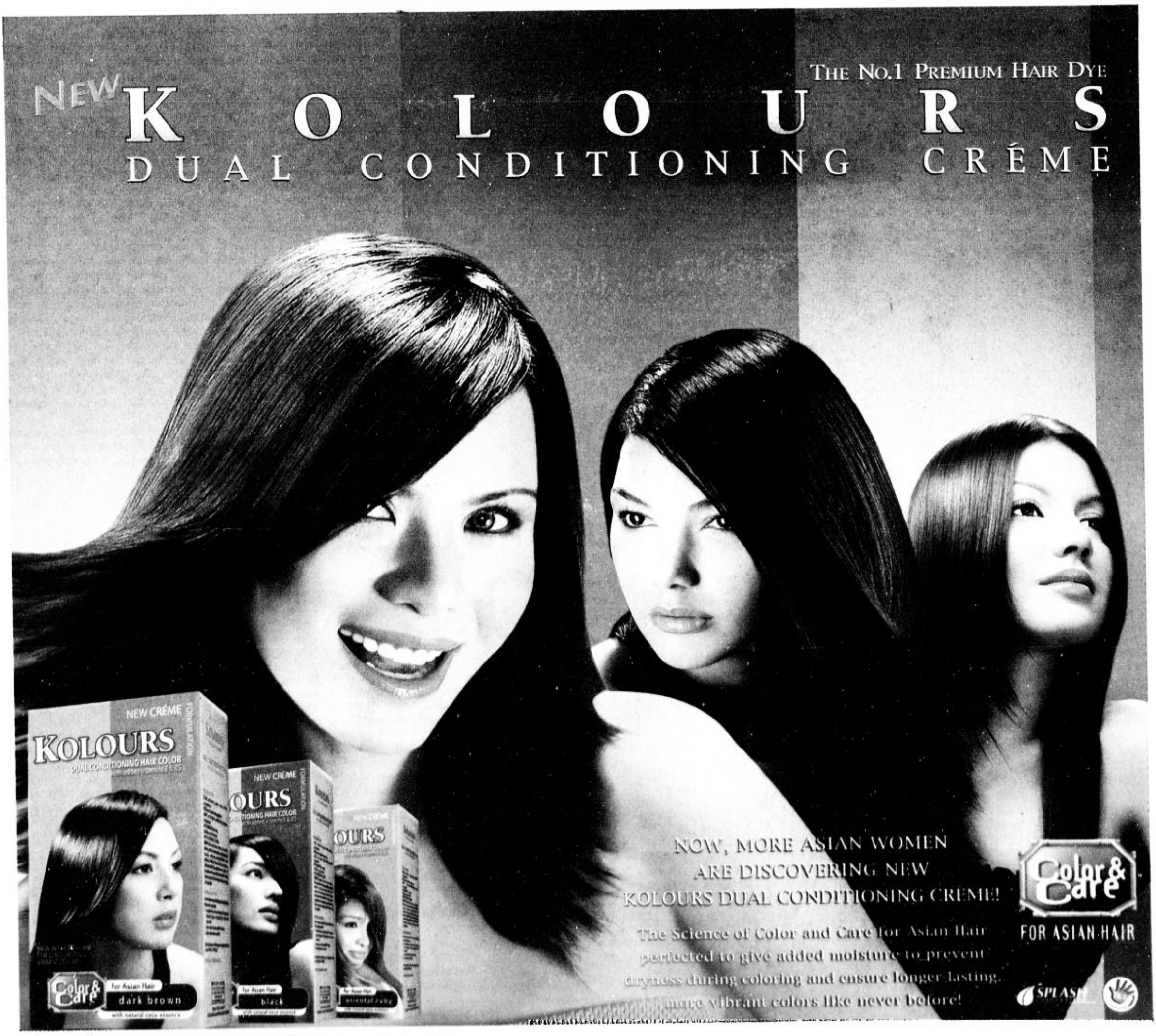
THE BLUSHING bride in a light-pink bridal gown and *piña* veil by Pitoy Moreno, modeled by Shana Bridget Watts. The men all wear *piña* barong by Moreno.

Pitoy goes to Washington

ON JUNE 17, PITOY Moreno's clothes once again will make a voyage, this time to Washington DC, upon the invitation of Philippine Ambassador Albert del Rosario.

"Pitoy not only highlights the best in Philippine fashion, fabric and design, he is also world-class and has been acclaimed with applause and bravos in most fashion

PITOY/ E3



THE CLAN, from the anniversary couple down to the toddlers and babes of the fourth generation, pose for posterity after the church ceremony marking the couple's 74th wedding anniversary at the INC Central Temple.

74 years, 27,000 days, one love

Buenaventura Mojica Lopez and Juana Crucena Umali, one year shy of their diamond wedding anniversary, have a surfeit of reasons to celebrate their union in style

THE CELEBRATING couple, Juana Umali, 93, and Buenaventura Lopez, 95

DAUGHTER Remedios Reynoso, son Romeo Lopez, Juana and Buenaventura Lopez, Sen. Alfredo Lim

"TAKE YOUR WEDDING vows to heart, live simply and together face all the challenges of a married life with courage, praying at every turn to be sure God is on your side."

This appears to be the creed by which this sturdy couple has lived their life.

Buenaventura Mojica Lopez and Juana Crucena Umali of Indang, Cavite, and Philadelphia, respectively, got married in 1932 when both were barely out of their teens. It was a time when the world was still reeling from the effects of the Depression and was, in less than a decade, to be plunged into yet another global conflict that would make life for the young couple doubly difficult.

In good, bad times

With their vow serving as constant reminder, from early on the couple struggled through life—together. Undaunted by the challenges before them, they held on to each other in good times and in bad.

Together, they prayed for God's help and guidance for every critical decision they would make. That such faith worked wonders for the couple cannot be doubted. As stark proof, they have lived longer than most others, and have emerged as though unscathed by various crises.

And this year, while still hale and hearty, they got to celebrate their 74th wedding anniversary together with their children, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

They had a surfeit of reasons to celebrate, the many good things they now have which they fondly hold up to friends like trophies lined up against the wall of their enviable life.

Witness these: Buenaventura is now 95, Juana 93. Yet they still walk good distances erect, without crutches or some such walking aids, and climb up and down a few flights of stairs without help. Their senses are unhampered, with only occasional lapses of hearing on Buenaventura's part.

Again and again, I do

Relatives and guests held their breath, but almost applauded when they heard the couple say clearly their "I do's" at the Feb. 10 church rites marking their anniversary (their second in eight years; they also had their renewal of vows for the belated celebration of their 65th anniversary in January 1998) held at the Iglesia ni Cristo Central Temple in Diliman, Quezon City.

The ceremonies were officiated by no less than the church's general secretary, Minister Arnel Tumanan. In addition, four ministers in the top hierarchy of the church, Ministers Glicerio Santos Jr., Emiliano Magtuto Sr., Lowell Menorca and Dan Orosa, stood as principal sponsors, together with Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay, whose wife was a classmate of one of the couple's daughters.

Sharing the couple's excitement in the crowd of well-wishers were Minister Bienvenido Santiago, the general evangelist and INC spokesman, and Sen. Alfredo Lim, a family friend. And although not physically present, INC executive minister Eraño G. Manalo and wife Cristina made their support and shared joy felt by sending their special, endearing personalized greetings etched in a beautifully framed photo of the couple.

Close friends of the family said they could not afford to miss this singular event. So they came in droves to congratulate the couple. Guests included such personalities as CA Justice Magdangal de Leon, well-known INC Ministers Jun Samson, Adriel Meimban, Joe Ventilacion, Romeo Ferma, and Dean Nic Tiosen of the New Era University College of Evangelical Ministry.

Happily intact

Buenaventura and Juana have nine of their 10 children surviving. The clan they have engendered has grown to just seven short of a hundred. But what's more remarkable, all of them, from the first to the fourth generation, happily live together with their families intact (a real source of pride for the celebrating couple).

The clan now boasts of a number of successful professionals and business people in diverse fields of endeavor. Four are doctors of medicine, including the eldest living daughter, Remedios of the RLR Squalene fame. Two children are dentists (Emelina and Hernando), the youngest son (Cesar, still a bachelor), a restaurateur, doctor of veterinary medicine, and consultant in animal husbandry at Jefferson University in Philadelphia.

By affinity, they have a lawyer, Moises Tolentino Jr. (married to youngest daughter Florinda), defender of Piatco's Naia Terminal 3 project; and a CPA, Luis Reynoso, husband of Remedios. Two other children are engineers (Angelita, chemical; and the eldest, Eloy, aviation, who has since retired and settled for farming in Naic, Cavite).

Son Romeo is a police science expert, formerly of the Manila's Finest. He has since retired as a US secret service officer. Another son, Honorio, is a tour and travel specialist. Of the second generation, two are professors, one a pharmacist, another a care home entrepreneur in California, and still one a middle-level executive of a multinational in the US. They even have a minister of the Iglesia ni Cristo among the grandchildren.

Songs and dances

At the reception held at the Peninsula Manila's Rigodon Ballroom, they were all there, or nearly all. More than half had planed in just a few days or a week before, coming all the way from Philadelphia, San Francisco, and Liverpool (in Ohio). They offered tributes of songs and dances.

Live and video messages of congratulations in four parts were aired and shown in a well-orchestrated program, including a segment which showed glimpses of the 65th year celebration in Manila Hotel aptly titled "One Crowded Hour of Glory."

Stirring period music was provided by the Leggiero String Band. Nostalgic songs from the '40s to the '80s rendered by baritone James Clark held the audience in awe.

Billed as "In Praise of God for a Truly Blessed Marital Union," the celebration truly fits the occasion. In a three-generational dialogue delivered by representatives from the first to third generations, a granddaughter brought to focus the remarkable achievement of the celebrating couple when she pointed out that 74 years of living together meant being with each other, spiritually if not always physically, for over 27,000 days. It is a feat deemed one for the books that Buenaventura and Juana has been able to accomplish.

In the end, the thank-you note and parting statement delivered by the celebrating couple, with their children flanking them, truly touched those in attendance.

Painter testifies to miraculous help

PURELY PERSONAL

Josephine Darang

THIS TRUE STORY OF OUR LADY OF the Abandoned's miraculous help to a jobless painter/artist was told by Fely Halili, who lives in Sta. Ana where there is a shrine for the Virgin. The painter was jobless for two years, his family in debt, and his children at risk of not being able to go to school.

In 2000, the Temporalities Ministry of Sta. Ana Parish commissioned the artist to paint the Virgin's face for her feast day. As the face of the Virgin took shape on the canvas, the artist and his wife talked to the Virgin.

Under the title "Inang Mapag-ampon" in Filipino, Our Lady of the Abandoned is known to help the very poor and very miserable, including the mentally ill.

The couple's eldest son had just graduated salutatorian from high school, but he failed all entrance exams he took. The boy, who really wanted to be a priest, asked the Virgin that if he passed the entrance exams to a seminary, it would be a sign that the Virgin wanted him to become a priest. He passed and is now a scholar at the Holy Angels Seminary taking up Philosophy.

The artist got a job abroad and paid his debts. His wife was able to open a mini-grocery in Cavite. All this proved to the couple that Mama Mary truly was a mother who took care of her children.

Prayer room

At the back of the main altar in Sta. Ana Church is a prayer room, Camarin de la Virgen, where the Virgin is enshrined in an octagonal glass surmounted with a huge Cross Imperial. The entire ceiling of the Camarin has paintings depicting the life of Jesus and Mary.

The image is a replica brought to the Philippines in 1717 from Valencia, Spain, where the devotion began in the 1400s. Devotees are encouraged to go to the Camarin, kiss the veil of the Virgin and ask for her help.

Help for farmers

For entrepreneur Donna Galsim-Carillo, her Christian duty is to support potato farmers in Benguet. She buys 2,000 kilos of potatoes (the Idaho kind), equivalent to 40 sacks, every week and supplies Ribbon Fries outlets in Metro Manila and Davao.

La Trinidad Mayor Fong Wan and Federation of Benguet Farmers president José Andico are happy about this because it encourages farmers to plant more to cope with the demand.

Donna's husband and business partner, engineer Ernie Carillo, devised a machine that would cut the potato into strips that look like ribbons. Hence, the name "ribbon fries."

Director Navalta of the Department of Agrarian Reform promised Donna the department would provide land for planting potato seedlings for distribution to farmers.

Blessed Teresa

In 1962, Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta received the Ramon Magsaysay Award.

That early, her work was already noticed by Asian nations. Eventually, it would be known throughout the world.

Mother Teresa's legacy of helping the poor comes into focus again with the third anniversary of her 2003 beatification in Rome and the coming Ramon Magsaysay Awards presentation in August.

Yugoslavian-born Mother Teresa, founder of the Missionaries of Charity, taught the world that every poor human being was another Christ. "See Jesus in the poor," she would repeatedly say during her life.

Before she came to Manila to receive her Magsaysay Award for International Understanding, the president of India also gave her an award for service to the nation. In response, she said, "But what have I done? It is His work and I simply follow."

The Missionaries of Charity have been in the Philippines since 1979. Former first lady Imelda Marcos provided them a home at the foot of Del Pan bridge to care for abandoned and malnourished children.

The nuns later put up the House for the Sick and Elderly in Tayuman Street, Tondo. They are now in different parts of the Philippines.

Helpful people

Our Lady's Club 513 was born when generous people committed themselves to help the Dominican Sisters of the Regina of Rossarii have a permanent home in 70 Scout Fernandez St., Quezon City. It will also be a home for Our Lady.

The house costs P13 million. The owners gave a five-year lease to the nuns.

Those who want to pledge P513 a month to help can call Regina Center for Contemplate Prayer at 3725327.

Sister Eppie Brazil, founder, is also organizing a contemplative-Marian pilgrimage July 3-17. Call 5211651 or text 0918-9083676.

Concert

Elsa Payumo of Buklod Pag-ibig sa Diyos sent a text message saying the group is holding a fundraising concert on June 24, 7 p.m., at the Meralco Theater to raise funds for Buklod's projects. Performers are Mitch Valdez and the singing priests Fr. Eric Santos and Fr. Bobby Titco. For tickets, call 7247534 or 7247536.

30 years

Charito Melchor called to say that the Philippines and Russia were marking 30 years of diplomatic relations. This is significant for Charito whose husband Alex was our ambassador to Russia. She also wrote the book "Divine Conspiracy: A Testimony of Faith on the Fatima Message in Russia." A festival will be held June 14-18 at the Cultural Center that will feature, among others, the Bolshoi Ballet.

MORENO with Binibining Pilipinas International 2004 Maan Bayot in a black-and-white modern Maria Clara ensemble, Mutya ng Pilipinas first runner-up 1993 Bing Pabular in a long fitted gown with neck and strap beadwork, and Bb. Pilipinas World 2004 Karla Bautista in a modern *baro't saya*

PHILIPPINE Ambassador to the United States Albert del Rosario is an avid purveyor of Philippine culture and fashion.

PHOTO COURTESY OF PHILIPPINE TATLER

Pitoy goes to Washington

From page E1

capitals of the world," says Del Rosario. "As we celebrate 100 years of Filipino migration and presence in the United States, our goal is to instill pride in our own cultural heritage and identity, to showcase the best in Philippine fashion among American audiences."

The 1 hour and 20-minute show will be held at the posh Ritz Carlton, with around 700 expected guests.

To Moreno, showing his clothes in Washington DC is an important event not just because the place represents the seat of world power but also because it brings back a lot of memories involving former residents of the White House. Moreno has designed clothes for some of the most famous First Ladies of the United States, including Nancy Reagan, Claudia Taylor Johnson, Rosalynn Carter, Elizabeth Ford and Barbara Bush.

The Washington show, according to Del Rosario, is expecting an audience comprised of the movers and shakers of the Fil-Am community and the US government, representatives from large American firms, diplomats and media. They will be treated to a visual feast not unlike what Moreno showed at his "Ginintuang Moreno" tribute at the CCP—a lot of Philippine costumes, modernized Maria Clara-inspired gowns, an all-*piña* collection, ruffled evening dresses in the spirit of the Spanish flamenco, and many more. Included, too, are new pieces Moreno has been working on.

Moreno will be bringing his 120-piece collection and his own entourage of models—15 of the country's best mannequins, mostly beauty queens. Included is Miss International 2005 Precious Lara Quigaman, who has been a favorite Pitoy model since winning the Binibining Pilipinas title.

As with most of Moreno's shows, the Washington DC event is for the benefit of Gawad Kalinga. Upon Moreno's return, he will also be staging a benefit show for the Philippine General Hospital.

"I am always pleased to show to the world that there is fashion in the Philippines," says the designer. "I believe my clothes, more than being fashion, are a cultural and historical storytelling."

A MIX of the finest *piña* and various fabrics make up this pink bustier gown with flower details.

HAND-PAINTED kimono over a black fitted gown

MISS International 2005 Precious Lara Quigaman wears a Moreno gown with flower embroidery and matching feather headdress.

MANILA'S most dashing male models in Pitoy's barong and pants creations: Hayden Kho, Alfred Vargas, Florante Valentin and Ariel Atendido

SUNDAY CROSSWORD

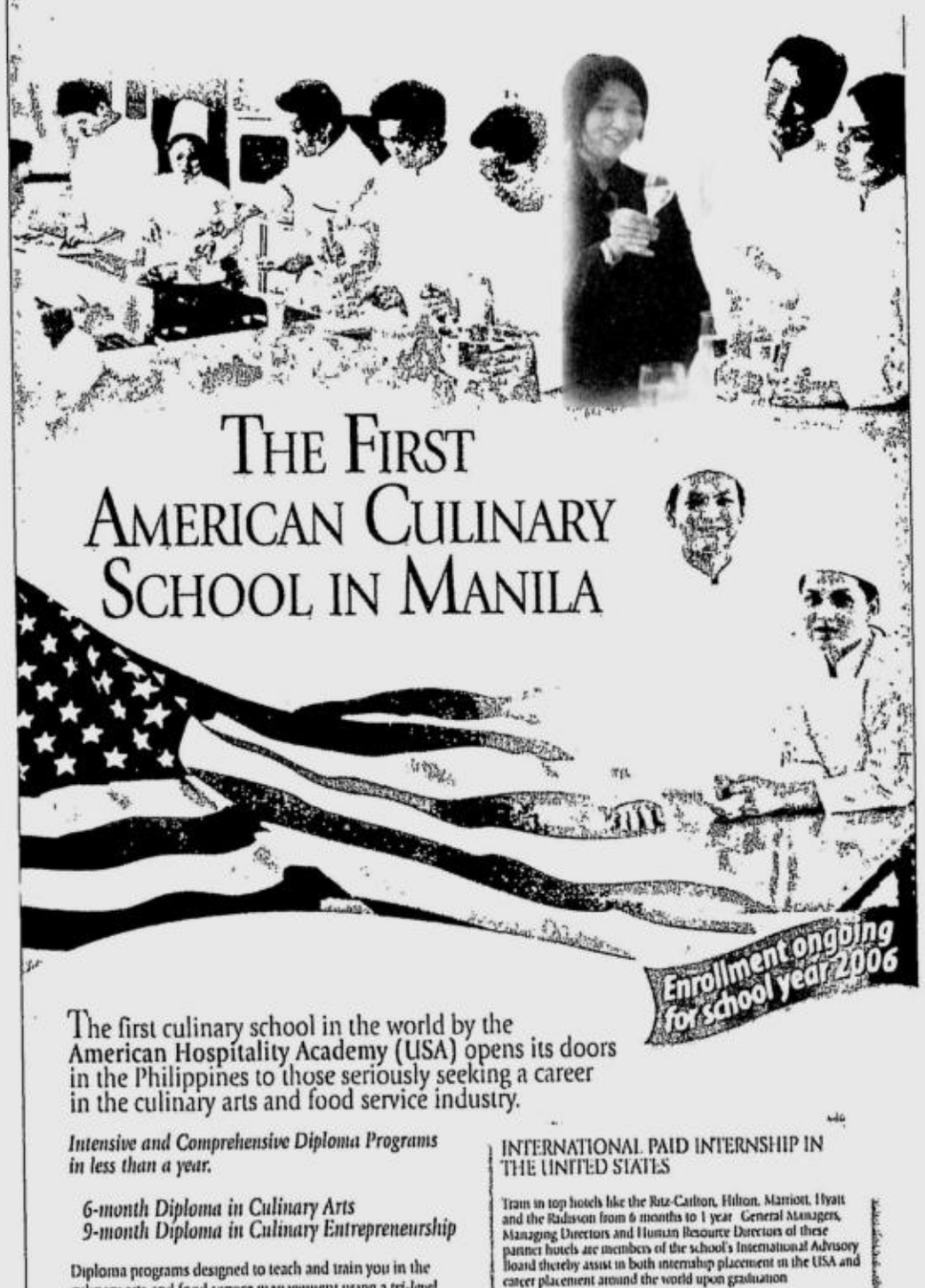
PREMIER CROSSWORD/ By Frank A. Longo — **SIGHTINGS**

ACROSS
1 Stars and Stripes
7 One-pot meals
12 TV brand
15 Fit together
19 Lisa Kudrow's "Friends" role
20 Ear-relevant
21 — polloi
22 Folk singer Guthrie
23 People stopping to see a merry-go-round?
26 Diagnostic picture
27 Part of IV
28 Outlook from a fortress?
30 — Khan
33 Eur. country
34 Cash in, as a coupon
35 Side-by-side workshop grippers?
42 Parts of IVs
46 Requiring no additional scissoring
47 Allayed
48 Thin — rail
51 Method
52 Selfish sort
54 Mutt's facial expression?
57 "When — said and done .."
58 Mind reader's gift
60 More creepy
61 Melancholy
62 Slant
63 French water
64 Become less bright
66 Crime lab material
67 Give it a whirl
68 Well-bred nobleman?
73 Abbr. in a car ad
76 Sgt., for one
77 Actress Cannon
78 Adam's other half
79 Subsides
83 Show on TV
84 Accompany
86 Nectar lover
87 — Lama
88 Bushy-tailed critter's sunshade?
92 Lifting
94 Took to court
95 Pipe joint
96 Response to a bad pun
98 San — (certain Californian)
99 Trapped morays
101 Serve as an intermediary for a Hindu god?
103 "Beats me"
107 Whale's place
108 Phone bug
109 Watchman's entry permit?
115 Slight color
118 "Star Trek" role for Marina Sirtis
119 Measure of chewy candy thickness?
124 Leave off
125 Juan's "one"
126 Unadorned
127 Dessert preceder
128 Cautious
129 Marina del —
130 Support for an injured arm
131 Hider's finder

DOWN
1 Bars on product labels: Abbr.
2 "— Na Na" (old TV show)
3 In support of
4 Pope from 440 to 461
5 Hot dog on —
6 Unified wholes, in psychology
7 Fit to be marketed
8 S followers
9 Kids' author Carle
10 "How — to know?"
11 Make a long cut in
12 Providence, — Island
13 Removed the center of
14 Bride's walkway
15 Upper limits
16 Is wrong
17 Bed support
18 Oscar de la —
24 Novelist — Stanley Gardner
25 Seafarers
29 Doggie doc
30 Allure
31 Use mouthwash noisily
32 Iris feature
36 Thespian's skill
37 San — Obispo, CA
38 Temptress
39 Prefix meaning "equal"
40 Mem. of Congress
41 Submitted right before the deadline
43 Brag
44 Poe's first name
45 Disreputable
48 Ireland's — Lingus
49 Scooched to the side
50 Thorough-fare
53 Dish-drying cloth
55 "Cheers" actor Roger
56 Teheran locale
59 Writer Grafton
63 Recital extra
64 Soar
65 Gardner of Hollywood
69 MIT grad, often
70 1999 film about a reality show
71 Ho-hum grade
72 Makes fun of
73 High-stick pool shot
74 Provoke
75 Thin porridge
80 Scourge
81 Treat for a monkey
82 Enlist
85 Flush
86 Fiber source
87 Nero's 503
89 Sense of self
90 Malaga Mrs.
91 Suffix with ball or bass
93 Goes forward
97 Building a tree house?
100 "How — love thee?"
101 Vena — (major blood vessel)
102 Luau souvenirs
104 Arouse, as wrath
105 Colonial diplomat Silas
106 Jetson boy
109 Pack neatly
110 Columnist Bombeck
111 Crime film genre
112 Rapscallions
113 Vend
114 Jai —
116 Eaten all up
117 Punta del —, Uruguay
120 French wine
121 Irritate
122 Golfer's gizmo
123 "So's — old man!"

answer on page E4

AHA
AMERICAN HOSPITALITY ACADEMY
PHILIPPINES



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CANDELARIA-CALIWAG

Aris Candelaria, son of **Jaime** and **Rhodora Candelaria**, will marry **Ethelyn Caliwag**, daughter of **Joselito** and **Bernadette Caliwag**, on June 25, at St. Francis Assisi Chapel. Reception follows at Fernwood Garden, QC. The couple are nurses in Kent Hospital, London. The bride will wear a pearl-white duchess satin gown in metallic silver and aqua blue traced with caviar and glass beads by **Eddie Baddeo**. He also created the wedding ensemble's gowns in basic blue and spring colors. **Heidi Balicha** will do the bride's hair and makeup.

Milestones

We welcome announcements of weddings and engagements. Submit names of engaged couple, names of parents, date and place of wedding, and gown designer along with a photo of the couple and a sketch of the bridal gown, if any, to the INQUIRER, P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office 1263 Makati City. E-mail to lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph. A photo of the bride and groom is required if the wedding has already taken place. Announcements will be printed depending on space availability and at no cost to the senders.

ANSWER TO SUNDAY CROSSWORD

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RAYA-PAGDANGANAN

Brando Raya, son of **Basilio** and **Estrellita Raya**, will marry **Ivy Pagdanganan**, daughter of engineer **Simeon** and **Lolita Pagdanganan**, on June 17, at Christ the King Parish in Greenmeadows, QC. Fr. **Jerry Orbos** will officiate. Reception will follow at Crowne Plaza Galleria, Ortigas Avenue, QC. The bride will wear an ivory-white silk gazar princess-cut gown with lace draping bodice and voluminous skirt embellished with caviar and glass beads designed by **Eddie Baddeo**, who also made the wedding ensemble in burgundy and champagne-gold motif. **Heidi Balicha** will do the bride's hair and makeup.

GUILLEN-CELON

Egay Guillen and **Doris Celon**, who are based in Singapore, will exchange vows at 4 p.m., June 12, at San Agustin Church. Dinner reception follows at Maynila Ballroom of the Manila Hotel.

PELONES-LAPITAN

Henry Pelones, son of **Apolonia Malibiran vda. de Pelones** of Lipa City, will marry **Rho-Ann Lapitan**, daughter of **Rogelio** and **Angelina Lapitan** of Pangasinan, on June 25 at Cathedral de San Sebastian, Lipa City.

ROSALUNA-CREUS

Reycon R. Rosaluna, son of Mr. and Ms **Teofilo Rosaluna Jr.**, will marry **Aimee R. Creus**, daughter of Mr. and Ms **Hermogenes Creus**, at 9:30 a.m., June 24, at the Basilica of Immaculate Conception, Batangas City. Reception will follow at Basilica Pastora Center, Batangas City.

DIAZ-GUEVARRA

Rob Diaz, son of **Fernando** and **Lilia Diaz**, weds **Jen Guevarra**, daughter of SPO3 **Alberto** and **Corazon Guevarra**, at Our Lady of the Holy Rosary Parish Church, Rosario Complex. Officiating priest is Rev. Fr. Reynaldo Reloj. Hair and makeup is by **Boots Turralba**.

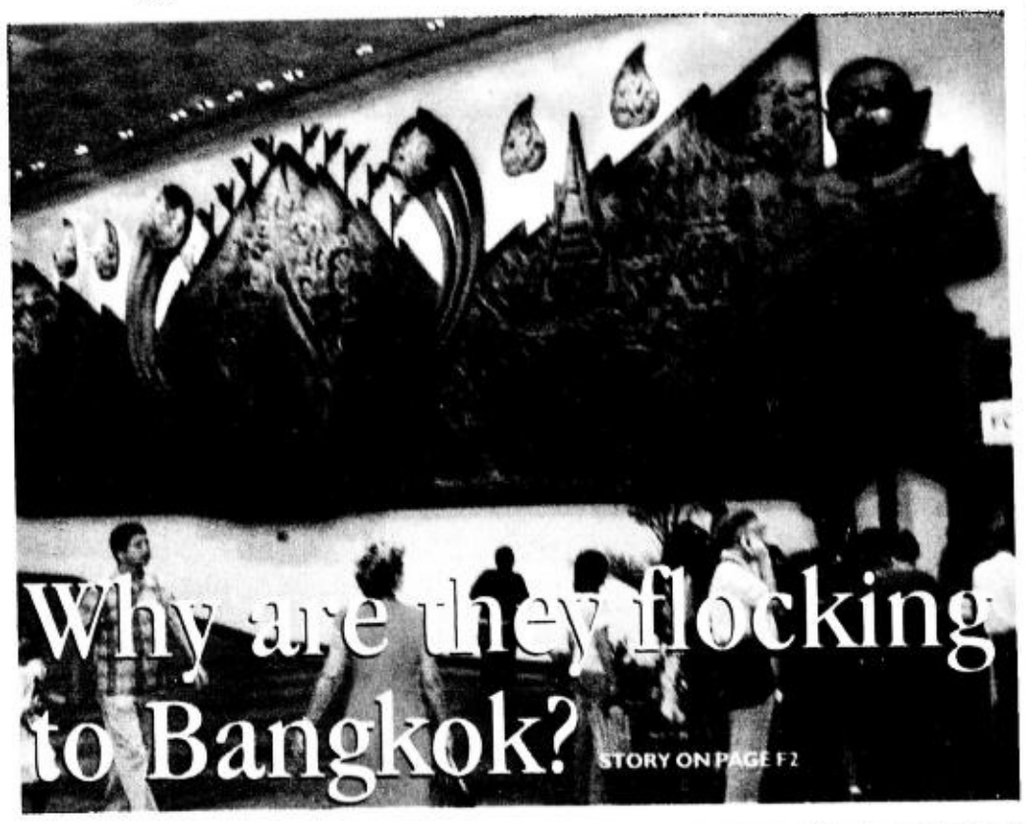
SUNDAY, JUNE 11, 2006

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Sunday LIFESTYLE Travel

Father knows best

For an upcoming story in the Sunday Lifestyle section, tell us in 150 words or less what's the best thing you've learned from your father. Deadline is June 14. E-mail to dad2reader@inquirer.com.ph. Or you can mail to PDI-Lifestyle Section, PO Box 2353, Makati Central Post Office, 1263 Makati City, attn: Dad to Reader. Include your full name, address and phone numbers.



Why are they flocking to Bangkok?

STORY ON PAGE F2

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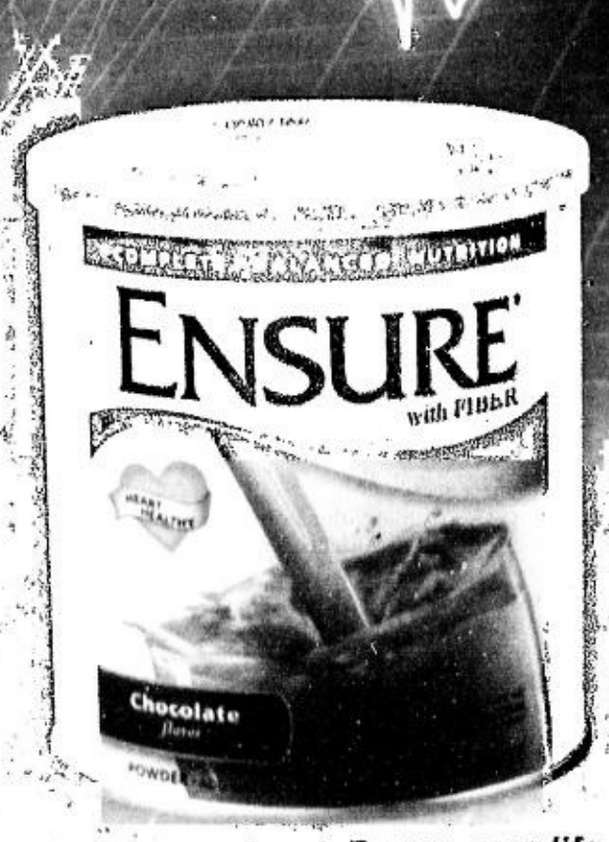

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GRAND Palace complex by Chao Phraya River

It's infernal weather—but why are they flocking to Bangkok?

Text and photos by Constantino C. Tejero

TOMORROW, MOST OF BANGKOK will meet at the Temple of Dawn in the evening.

Because June 12 is when the Thai capital is holding one of its grandest events—the Royal Barge Procession, to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the accession to the throne of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej, or Rama IX, the world's longest-reigning monarch.

This is the highlight of the yearlong celebration throughout the kingdom, and one of Asia's longest-running traditions. Starting at Wasukri Landing Place at 7:30 p.m., a fleet of 52 vibrantly colored barges manned by some 2,000 navy men in color-coded uniforms will be rowing for an hour along the Chao Phraya, the River of Kings.

Members of the royal family will be seated on four main barges, three of them about a century old—some 50 meters long, of whole teak logs ornately carved, lacquered in gold, red and pink, and encrusted with mirror shards. The procession ends at the Temple of Dawn.

During one of several rehearsals of this fluvial parade, Thailand's Tourism Authority governor Juthamas Siriwan speaks to a small group of Filipino journalists on the riverbank grounds of the Royal Thai Navy Institute.

Siriwan says they're expecting about a million visitors to witness the event, from 29 heads of state and royal guests to plain tourists. She says they're deploying about a million personnel to police and protect the area.

Grandest scale

The grand invitation has been extended to the Filipino delegates by the tourism authority through its Philippine marketing representative Dave de Jesus. Thus we get a glimpse of the procession's first rehearsal by the riverbank, and marvel at the slow gliding of shadowy boats, the chanting of hymns at dusk to the throbbing of tom-toms—it is theater on the grandest scale.

We witness the spectacular show of light and sound and the pageantry of ancient ceremony from the Supatra River House (a charming old house turned into a restaurant serving superb cuisine), amid the lotuses still abloom late in the afternoon.

STAFF manning the Philippine booth at the wellness exhibition

WOW Philippines booth

The country has just emerged from what has been called a Silken Revolution, when Prime Minister Shinawatra Thaksin had to step down, yet it seems like business as usual. Security at the airport and in the malls is relatively lax (so unlike in the Philippines where security is stringent to the point of being annoying, even at our provincial airports and in the neighborhood convenience store).

To date, it is still a caretaker government and there's no legislature, yet tourists keep pouring in as if nothing had happened. This makes Don Muang International Airport the busiest in Southeast Asia. Bangkok being at the center of an aviation network connecting Europe, Asia and Oceania, its airport is overloaded with 37 million passengers a year.

(Watch out for the opening later this year of Suvarnabhumi Airport on a 3,300-hectare site 32 km east of Bangkok. Bannered as the Pride of Thailand, it is meant to handle 45 million passengers a year.)

Main attraction

Siriwan says their goal is to attract some 14 million tourists for this year. One or two Filipino delegates gasp and couldn't help but titter, considering that our Department of Tourism is hard pressed to attract even three million to visit our shores.

"The reason why totally escapes me," says French-Swiss national Pierre-André Pelletier, general manager of Amari Watergate, the five-star luxury hotel in central Bangkok where the Philippine press representatives are billeted. "Because you have super attractions—you have the best beaches, you have very warm people."

Pelletier is a frequent visitor to the Philippines, having been to Boracay 15 times. As for Amari, he says he couldn't complain as it has an occupancy rate of almost 90 percent the whole year round. (Again, the Filipino delegates gasp.)

Of Thailand's main tourist attractions, we'd count that penchant for billing by title and marketing by scale. It is human nature, of course, to want to experience the biggest, the longest, the tallest, and what have you.

Largest restaurant

There is, for instance, the Royal Dragon. Restaurant, billed as the biggest in the world at 3.5 hectares. It is a complex of structures built in the manner of ancient Chinese architecture.

In humid weather, customers dine al fresco. in what looks like a central courtyard, with live performances on a stage. During a downpour, tarpaulin coverings are rolled up, or you may transfer into one of those glass-walled rooms that can instantly transform into a. videoke lounge.

The resto can seat 5,000 diners, served by a staff of 1,200. Waitresses and waiters in ancient Chinese costumes have to roller-skate around to bring the food piping hot to your table.

Meanwhile, Bangkok's newest mecca for shoppers, Siam Paragon, is being touted as Southeast Asia's largest upscale shopping mall. Standing on 500,000 sq m of prime land, it houses 300 high-fashion brand boutiques, an exotic-car gallery, fancy food outlets, a 1,800-seat opera house, a 15-screen cinema with seating capacity for 5,500.

On its ground floor and basement are two levels of Siam Ocean World, Southeast Asia's largest indoor oceanarium. Here are not only sharks, electric eels, giant groupers and manta rays but also penguins, otters, monstrous water rats. And imagine a school of piranhas passing just a little above your head.

Widest stage

Then there is the Ratchada Grand Theatre, with a seating capacity of 2,000 and one of the world's largest stages, approximately a third of the width of Wembley Stadium—big enough to fit in 400 elephants.

Its three-act performance called "Siam Niramit" is a jaw-dropping experience. It depicts traditional village life but the stage is filled with a cast of 150 with some 500 costumes, state-of-the art sets, high-tech laser lights, thunderous sound system, eye-popping visual effects. Built on stage is a whole village complete with goats and chickens, even a river running along upstage with a boat gliding by and a man diving into the water.

The senses are overwhelmed by human hustle and bustle, natural calamities and supernatural activities. A religious festival is enacted throughout the theater, attended by two elephants in a procession and mythical beings flying hither and thither. And then there is thunder and lightning, and a sudden downpour of—what?—rain.

Seconds after the seedlings have been planted in the rice terraces (yes, they have those on stage, too), the stalks sprout and the blades unfurl before one's eyes, and the rice plants start to grow so fast that soon it's harvest time and the awestruck audience watches as the grains ripen goldenly. *(Wala kaming masabi.)*

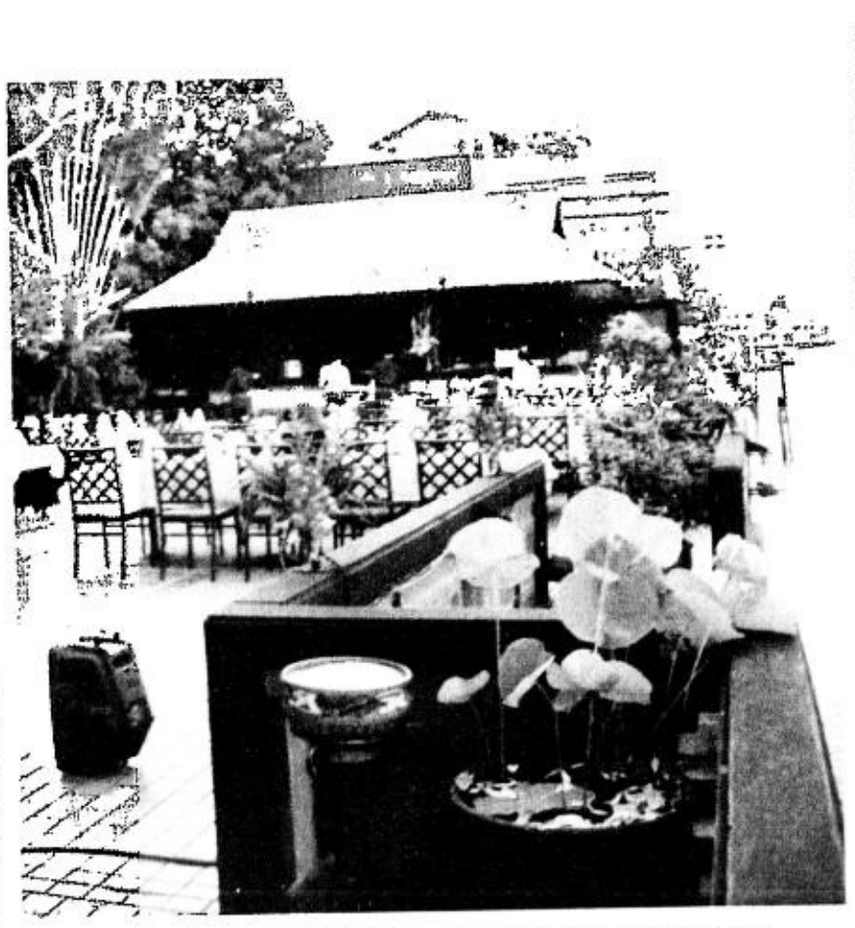
Most delicious

Thailand's climate is two degrees centigrade higher than ours, and their traffic is more chaotic (we swear!), yet tourists keep coming. We can probably trace that to its simple yet excellent tourism marketing.

A consistent top-selling come-on is Bangkok being marketed as a shoppers' paradise, crawling with street stalls beyond counting, shopping plazas and hypermarkets, floating markets, sidewalk markets, night bazaars and that superabundant Chainatown (as they spell it). It is Grand Promo Sale over there through June and July.

A recent trend is the aggressive promotion of ecodestinations and medical tourism. Bangkok just hosted the International Spa and Wellness Conference and Exhibition for two days at the Queen Sirikit National Con-

WOMAN prepares elaborate version of *atchara*.



GO al fresco at the Supatra River House, the better to watch the Royal Barge Procession.

Tuition hike puts her dream on hold

EMILY'S POST

Emily A. Marcelo

DEAR EMILY,

It's so hard to trust anyone with your problem nowadays but I'm hoping you will help me with mine.

I am an incoming third year BSECE student. Due to tuition increase, I don't know if I can continue my studies. I really want to finish my course and hope that someday I'll become successful. The scholarships I have checked out are only for freshmen students. That's where my problem lies.

My mother owns a store but her income is not enough to pay for my college education. My father died when I was in Grade IV. Three years is a long journey to finish college.

I really want to become an engineer. Can you help me become one? If you have scholarship grants for students like me, I want to apply. I'm willing to submit all the necessary papers and requirements.

AIMEE

Lack of money for tuition should never be a hindrance to anyone with a burning ambition to succeed. Don't nail your hopes on getting a scholarship. And stop giving yourself a deadline!

Finishing your engineering course in three years is just too tall an order. That's unless there's a six by six about to run over you or there's a job already waiting for you... There's no need to rush especially when there's no money in sight!

Start by working for it. Get a job. Go to the school registrar and tell him/her your problem. The school might even give you a scholarship if you present your case forcefully enough. That won't be free probably and you may be asked to sign a contract to work there after graduation. Whatever the terms are, go for it, if it will make you realize your dream.

Or apply in a company that will allow you to study in the evening. Many bosses have been there and done that and would understand your predicament. Just be honest and sincere. Many people have big hearts.

There are so many successful businessmen and politicians around us who were so poor growing up—they were working students in college. No shame there. They all toiled for long hours and never let up until they finished school. It wasn't easy then and it wouldn't be easy for you—but success will taste sweeter if you go through the grinder, so to speak.

Don't sit by and wait for that bolt of lightning to open the heavens for you. Get up, get going and start looking... It's only the first step that's difficult!

E-mail the author at emarcelo@inquirer.com.ph, Subject: Lifestyle, or send your letters to INQUIRER. Listen to Ms Marcelo co-host the program "Kalikasan Vigilante," 7:15 p.m.-8:30 p.m., Monday-Friday, on dwBR 104.3 FM.

June 12 is when the Thai capital holds one of its grandest events—the Royal Barge Procession, to celebrate the 60th anniversary of King Bhumibol's accession to the throne

ENTRANCE to exhibit hall of Queen Sirikit National Convention Center

vention Center, where our DOT had put up a booth in the exhibition hall.

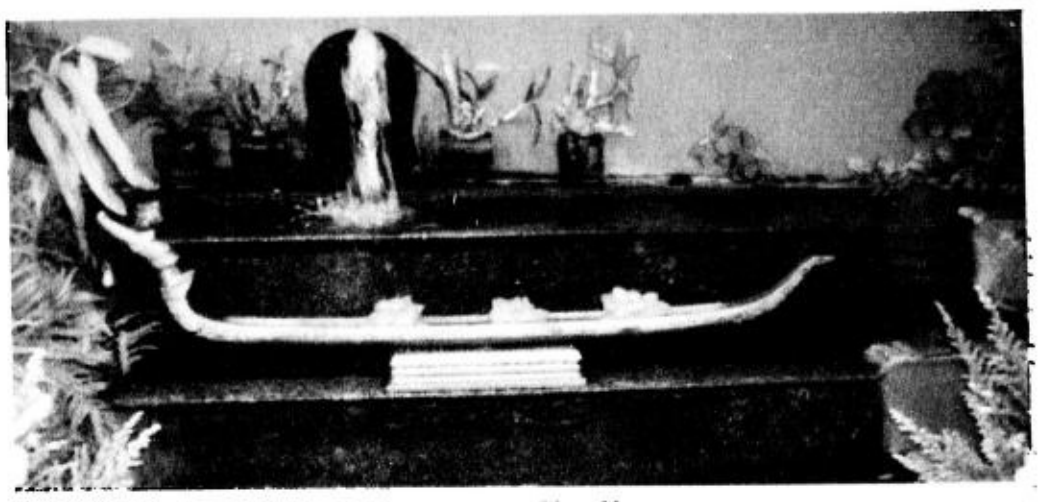
Jostling with those spas and centers for wellness are the sleaze districts like Patpong and Pattaya. They lure the tourists, too, and the government just has to support and market them.

Probably the most overlooked bringer of tourists is the traditional Thai cuisine, which some gourmets consider to be the most delicious in Asia. Think *tom yam kung*. Think sticky rice topped with ripe *nam dokmai* mango then smothered with seasoned coconut milk. Think boiled rice in jasmine-floating cold water.

Biggest seller

What we think is Thai tourism's biggest seller is the culture itself, as expressively manifested in their arts and crafts, Buddhist rituals and religious festivals, the innumerable ancient temples dotting the modern cityscape, the native cuisine, traditional music, ancient theater, dance performances from *likay* to *khon*, the unique martial art *muai* Thai, the iconic *tuk-tuk*.

Even an establishment as commercial and modern as the Four Seasons Hotel carries this colorful culture with pride—from its elaborate



QUAINT fountain greets visitors to the Supatra River House.

woodwork, handpainted silk panels, exquisite statuary and stunning fresco paintings at every nook and cranny up to the ceiling, to its food outlets such as the Spice Market replete with aromatic themes (voted by locals as the most delicious Thai restaurant in Bangkok).

Thailand is the only country in Asia that has not been invaded, colonized and brutalized by foreign powers—and freedom from such racial trauma must have caused that inherent gentleness, friendliness and warmth the foreign tourist can sense in the Thai people.

Despite what he himself describes as a political mess his country is in these says, the Thai king remains beloved by his people.

Tomorrow the world shall see the outpouring of that love, as people gather on both banks of Chao Phraya River to watch him and his queen float by. Even the sacred lotus blooms at dusk in anticipation.

Healthy Bones Crusade

Anlene Bone Health Check Marathon attended by celebrities fit to the bone.

Anlene, being the Bone Expert, was the first brand to ever mount a bone scan marathon for free. Held at Glorietta last May 13, 2006, the "Save Your Bones, Love Your Life" Mega Bone Scan Event is a crusade to spread the word about bone health and osteoporosis prevention. A total of 1,400 scans was conducted during the day, with eight bone scan machines devoted to hundreds of women who came for their tests and joined the activities.

The Osteoporosis Society of the Philippines Foundation participated in the day's slew of activities. A talk about prevention of osteoporosis was conducted by **Dr. Julie Li-Yu**, emphasizing the growing threat of this bone disease which affects women in their post-menopausal age.

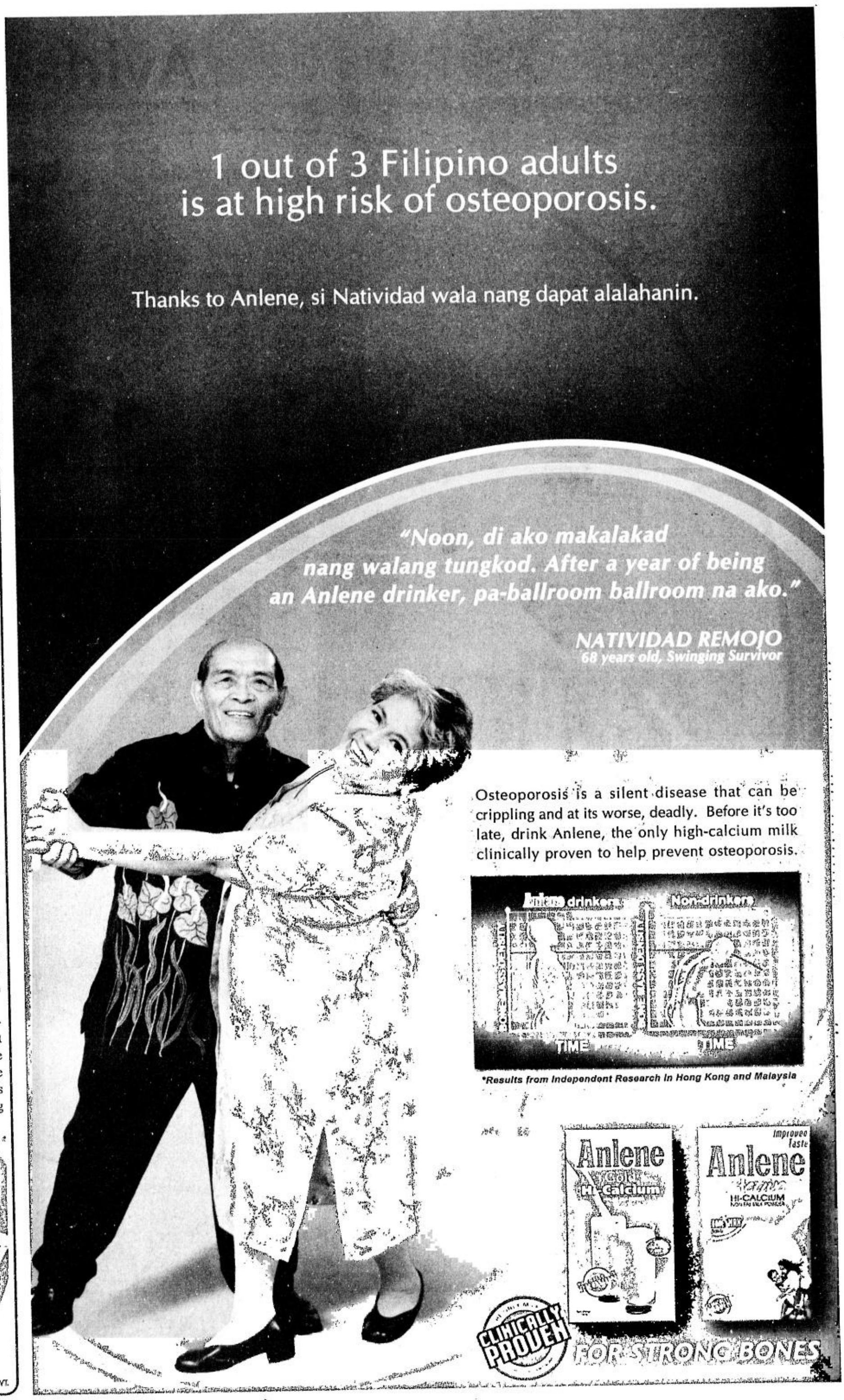
Anlene endorser **Pilita Corrales** took the lead in having a bone scan. Her test results showed that drinking **Anlene** everyday helped fortify her bones so that she can still do her famous signature back bend.

Champion runner **Elma Muros Posadas** maintains her staying power in her field with a proper diet, exercise, and drinking milk as her regular regimen.

Other celebrities who joined the **Anlene** crusade for healthy bones were singer/performer **Pinky Marquez**, dancer and choreographer **Maribeth Bichara** and Repertory Philippines' **Pinky Amador**, women who are still at the peak of their chosen fields.

Regine Tolentino challenged the women in the audience to some bending movements and hula hoop competition and wowed her audience with her dance showdown demonstrating her strong bones.

Jolina Magdangal hosted the energy-packed mega bone scan event which was well attended despite the rains. It awakened among women the importance of battling osteoporosis by saving their bones and loving their lives.



TRAVELBRIEFS

MEMBERS of the Tipano Band of Palawan's Magsaysay municipality perform during the Baragatan Festival's Saraotan sa Dalan.

Palawan holds Baragatan Festival

The recent annual Baragatan Festival of Palawan featured a more indigenous street-dancing competition at the Capitol Park Square in Puerto Princesa City. Dancers and musicians from 14 municipalities competed for the best rendition of the Cuyonon Ati-Ati.

Magsaysay bagged the grand prize of P1 million, followed by Cuyo (P700,000) and Coron (P300,000). All three are island municipalities located in Northern Palawan, whose original inhabitants are predominantly Cuyunon.

Gov. Joel T. Reyes, who led Palaweños in the 12-day festivities, said the focus on the traditional Palawan parade dance gave the Baragatan street dancing more local color and originality.

Thousands of Palaweños, as well as local and foreign tourists, lined Rizal Avenue to watch the Saraotan sa Dalan.

Non-winning groups got P200,000 each.

Nikka Amiel Dedicatoria, from Cuyo, won the Mutya ng Palawan 2006.

A new event this year was the Baragatan y ang mga Santo, or Conference of the Saints, a Cuyonon religious tradition in honor of the Sacred Heart and Immaculate Heart of Mary. More than a dozen images from various parishes and *barangay* chapels in Puerto Princesa City, Aborlan and Magsaysay participated in the procession that began with a mass at the Immaculate Conception Cathedral, celebrated by Bishop Pedro D. Arigo.

More Pinoys visiting Singapore

Singapore has seen a tremendous growth in the number of Filipino visitors for the last three years. Last year alone, some 319,898 visitors traveled to Singapore—a 30.09 percent increase over the previous year's record.

According to Singapore Tourism Board-Philippine office's Rocson Chang, "From 1991-2002, the average annual growth of Filipino visitors to Singapore stood at only 5.47 percent. We started to experience strong double-digit growth from 2003 onwards, which, some of us may recall, is the year SARS hit the industry."

And from just 4.75 days in 2002, Filipinos are now spending over six full days in the Lion City.

Tourists will soon enjoy the Flyer (a giant Ferris wheel to be completed in 2008), two integrated resorts with casinos (completed in 2008 and 2009), Gardens by the Bay (three new gardens along the waterfront, to be completed on 2010), and Spaceport Singapore.

Visiting Singapore has also been made more affordable and convenient with the emergence of low-cost carriers into the Philippines such as Tiger Airways and Jet Star Asia.

Recently, the STB-P launched the Island-to-Island campaign, a joint effort with the local government of Puerto Galera, Oriental Mindoro. Running until June 15, the campaign promotes both Singapore and Puerto Galera to local and foreign tourists under the umbrella slogan, "Enchanting Puerto Galera, Uniquely Singapore."

Emirates launches Nagoya route

Emirates has launched services to Nagoya, its second gateway to Japan after Osaka and the 84th destination in its global route network. Emirates now has offices in Tokyo, Osaka and Nagoya.

The airline expects to transport more than 80,000 passengers and 5,000 tons of cargo every year on the Nagoya-Dubai route.

Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al-Maktoum, chair and chief executive of the Emirates Airline and Group, officially inaugurated the new Emirates office in Nagoya.

On the inaugural flight, Sheikh Ahmed led a delegation of Emirates' senior executives in meeting trade partners and customers in Nagoya.

Father's Day package

The Legend Villas celebrates Father's Day with a special family rate of only P4,999 net per night for an overnight accommodation for two adults and a maximum of two children aged 7 years old and below. The family package includes an overnight stay in a Superior Room, free use of the swimming pool and free local calls. For their dining pleasure, the family will enjoy a buffet breakfast and family-style lunch and dinner for four persons at the hotel coffee shop Lola Maria. Lola Maria serves a superb menu of Filipino specialties and international dishes.

Dad gets a special gift from the hotel and can also avail of a number of discounts. The family can invite relatives and friends over and get 60-percent off on an additional room booking based on rack rates. They also get 60-percent off on their next visit based on rack rates.

The package also includes 20-percent off on massage, manicure, pedicure and foot spa services; 20-percent off on Business Center services, 10-percent off on laundry services and 10-percent off on food and beverages for a real family treat. Celebrate all that Dad is at The Legend Villas with this special package from now until June 30. The Legend Villas is at Pioneer corner Madison Streets, Mandaluyong City. The hotel is owned and managed by Legend Hotels International Corporation. Call 7022700 to 04, fax 6389255 to 56, or e-mail reservations@legendhotels.com.ph or visit www.legendhotels.com.ph

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Parang kailan lang, siya'y inuugoy.
Ngayon, grade school na si Totoy.
Ang bilis talaga ng panahon.
Pati nga bahay na noon pa pangarap,
Ngayo'y akin nang nahanap.
Buwanang bayad, 'di ko inaalala
Dahil ito'y kayang-kaya.
Kaya si Totoy at ang bayad sa bahay,
Magtatapos ng sabay.

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SUNDAY, JUNE 11, 2006 G1

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- 11 buildings to be put up(with 50-70 units per building)
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- A 22-Storey Luxury condo project located in BAGUIO is available for development / funding.
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- Very Ideal for Retirees
- Local and international market is readily available.

for inquiries, Pls. call:
(0917) 791-3714
(0917) 535-1387

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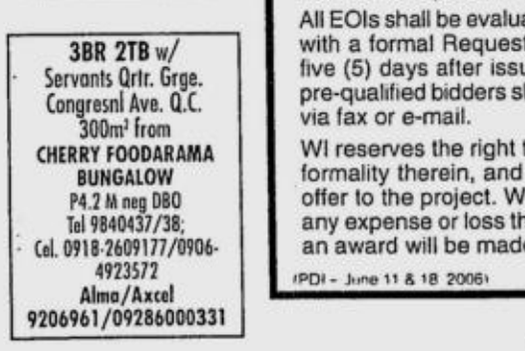

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Department of Education, Science and Training
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AUSTRALIAN SCHOLARSHIPS
Australian Leadership Awards

An opportunity for future leaders

The **Australian Leadership Awards (ALA)** is a new award scheme within the Australian Government's *Australian Scholarships* program. The purpose of ALA scholarships is to develop leadership within the Asia Pacific region.

ALA scholarships are for longer-term post-graduate study in Australia at masters or doctoral level. Managed by the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), **ALAs** are competitive and open only to citizens of countries in receipt of ODA.

Applications are now open and will close on 31 July 2006 for commencement at an Australian university in January 2007.

Relevant fields of study for an **ALA** include management, economics, business, political science, philosophy, history, law and public policy. In 2007, priority fields will include international trade, disease pandemics, security and clean energy.

Preference will be given to candidates who can demonstrate:
(i) that they are in a leadership role, or
(ii) have the potential to assume a leadership role in the public, private or community sectors

In each case merit will be given to candidates likely to influence development outcomes at the national and regional levels.

Mandatory requirements:
- a record of high-level undergraduate or post-graduate academic achievement; and
- advanced English language ability.

Awards will be allocated equitably between men and women.

Information: www.australianscholarhips.gov.au

Email: ala@ausaid.gov.au

WINROCK INTERNATIONAL
Putting Ideas to Work

INVITATION FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

The Alliance for Mindanao Off-grid Renewable Energy 2 (AMORE 2) is a 5-year program being implemented by Winrock International (WI) in partnership with US Agency for International Development (USAID), Department of Energy (DOE), Mirant Philippines Foundation, and the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). AMORE 2 aims to contribute to the peace and development initiatives in Mindanao by improving the quality of life in unelectrified rural communities through sustainable renewable energy projects and effective community organizing.

WI is inviting local and international organizations (with Philippine-based offices), including academic and quasi-academic institutions, to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) to conduct Pre-Feasibility Studies at 14 pre-selected AMORE microhydro sites in the Province of Lanao del Sur. Interested organizations must provide information (company profile, brochures, description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions, availability of appropriate skills among staff, etc.) which indicates their qualification/s to perform the services.

EOIs must be made in writing and forwarded to the address below **not later than 5:00 PM** of **June 19, 2006.**

Arthur S. Barrameda
Procurement Officer
Unit 1509, Jollibee Plaza
Emerald Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City 1600

Tel. Nos: (+63 2) 687-9091 / 92 / 94
Direct Line: (+63 2) 634-1774
Fax No.: (+63 2) 631-8215
E-mail: abarrameda@amore.org.ph

Electronic copies in PDF formats are also accepted.

All EOIs shall be evaluated by the AMORE Contracts Oversight Team. Bidders shall be provided with a formal Request for Proposal (RFP) kit. A pre-bid conference shall also be convened five (5) days after issuance of the RFP to discuss details and accommodate inquiries. Only pre-qualified bidders shall be awarded the contract. Pre-qualified organizations shall be notified via fax or e-mail.

WI reserves the right to reject any or all applications for pre-qualification, waive any required formality therein, and accept the bid and award the subcontract to the most advantageous offer to the project. WI assumes no responsibility to compensate or indemnify the bidder for any expense or loss that may be incurred for the preparation of the bids, nor does it guarantee an award will be made.

(PDI - June 11 & 18 2006)

PNOC-ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Bldg 5, Ground Floor Energy Complex, Merritt Road
Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City
Tel. No. 893-1320, Local 5388

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The PNOC-Energy Development Corporation is inviting all interested suppliers to apply and submit sealed bids for the supply and delivery of the following:

Various Laboratory Equipment under under PN-637206 / 637207 / 637213
Approved Budget PHP 2,231,900.00

Eligibility forms and bidding documents shall be available for issuance at the above address c/o **Cielo B. de Castro** starting **June 7, 2006,** from 9:30 AM to 3:30 PM and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P400.00 per document.

For purposes of clarifying certain matters, a pre-bidding conference shall be held on **June 16, 2006, 2:00 pm** at the above address.

Applications for eligibility and sealed bids shall be submitted to, and registered with the PNOC-EDC Supply Management Department at the above address, and thereafter dropped in the padlocked bid box thereat not later than **2:00 p.m. (Supply Management Office Wall Clock Time) of June 30, 2006.** Public opening of bids shall follow immediately thereafter. **Late bids shall not be accepted.**

Prospective bidders shall signify conformance to the bidding terms and conditions, as required, and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution. Source of funding is from Internal Cash Generation of PNOC-EDC. All bids should be within the Approved Budget for the Contract in order to qualify.

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation reserves the right to annul the bidding process, to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality in the bids received and to accept such bid which is most advantageous to PNOC-EDC without thereby incurring liability to the affected bidder or bidders or any obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the ground(s) for PNOC-EDC's action.

Chairman-Bids and Awards Committee II

(PDI - June 11 & 18 2006)

SMALL BUSINESS GUARANTEE AND FINANCE CORPORATION
Remedial and Acquired Assets Management Group

INVITATION TO BID

The following properties will be offered for sale thru **PUBLIC BIDDING** on **JUNE 28, 2006.**

Asset Code	Lot Size (sqm)	TCT No.	Description	Minimum Bid Price
ANTIPOLO PMRI-L1	500	R-34963	Residential lot located in Golden Hills Subd. Bo. San Roque, Antipolo City	P400,000.00
LA UNION DC-L1	494	RT-3628	Residential lot located in Mabini St. Catbagen, San Fernando, La Union	988,000.00
NUEVA ECIJA KABF-L2	54,041	NT-306741 to 42	Agro-industrial lot located in Brgy. San Roque (now Brgy. Maghipon) Gapan, Nueva Ecija	6,593,400.00
PAMPANGA MF-L1	39,317	10412-R.P.	Agro-industrial lot located in Bo. Sto. Rosario, Minalin, Pampanga	982,925.00
QUEZON CITY MFF-L1	248	N-284532	Residential lot located in L5 B5 Baloan St. New Heaven Subd. Brgy. Kaligayahan, Novaliches, Quezon City	992,000.00
QUEZON GB-L1	200	T-370397	Residential lot located in Bo. Sabang, Catanauan, Quezon Province	100,000.00

Type of Equipment	Description	Minimum Bid Price
Isuzu Elf	Reconditioned - Plate No. XJE 465; Body Type/Color: Dropside with Canopy/Off White; Motor Engine No. Isuzu 4HF1 Diesel Engine (1 unit)*Equipment is stored in RTC Madella, Quirino Province*	200,000.00
Piping Machine	2 units - "Multi-Tech" with Serial Nos. 944569 and 945085, both made in Korea, complete with clutch motor, working table and other standard accessories (automatic)	215,000.00/unit
Hemming Machines	2 units- "Kingtex" CTL-6511 with Serial Nos. 2033104 and 2031429, both made in Taiwan, complete with clutch motor, working table and other standard accessories (automatic)	215,000.00/unit
High speed machines	9 units - "Kingtex" KL-550M/A single needle, computerized high speed machines, made in Taiwan complete with clutch motor, working table and other standard accessories with the ff. Serial Nos.: 2019041, 2027578, 0987257, 2026850, 2026841, 0987407, 0987411, 0987564 and 0987271	51,744.00/unit

GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. Description of the above properties, bidding rules and regulations and the prescribed Bid Forms are available at the 17th Flr.139 Corporate Center, 139 Valero St. Salcedo Village, Makati City or contact the following at tel. no. (02)813-57-21/(02)751-1888, Messrs. Peter V. Pizarro/Santi Tuliao
2. Sealed Bid Forms will be received by RAAMG/SBGFC starting 9:00 a.m. up to 2:00 p.m on June 28, 2006.
3. Each Bid Proposal shall be accompanied by cash or Certified Cashier's/Manager's Check issued in Metro Manila payable to the Small Business Guarantee and Finance Corporation (SBGFC) in the amount equivalent to 10% of the bid. Please accomplish one (1) Bid Form for every property.
4. Properties are sold on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS", and the winning bidder shall take possession of the property without seeking assistance from SBGFC.
5. Bidders are enjoined to personally inspect/ investigate/verify the actual site and status of documents of ownership with the appropriate Register of Deeds before formally submitting their bids to ascertain their actual condition.
6. Representatives/agents are required to submit a Letter of Authorization or SPA issued by the principal buyer.
7. SBGFC RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITY THEREIN, ACCEPT SUCH BID AS MAY BE CONSIDERED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE COMPANY OR CALL OFF A BIDDING PRIOR TO ITS ACCEPTANCE OF THE BIDS AND CALL FOR A NEW BID UNDER AMENDED RULES. THE DECISION OF SBGFC IS FINAL.

All sales shall be subject to confirmation by the SBGFC Credit Committee.

(sgd.) FE DOLORES GATUS
Chairperson, ADC

(PDI--June 11 & 18, 2006)

Trans Co

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION
SOUTH LUZON OPERATION & MAINTENANCE
Tel. No.: (02) 5206776; (02) 9814595 / 9814539 / 9814576 / 9814577 / 9814578 LOC. 4002; (049) 4114500 LOC. 4002

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
AD NO. TRANSCO 2006-07A

1. The *NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION, South Luzon Operation and Maintenance* (TRANSCO-SLOM) through the *2006 Corporate Budget approved by the TransCo Board* intends to apply the sum as indicated below being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the following Purchase Requisitions (PR). Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening

BID SCHEDULE	PR NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	QTY.	APPROVED BUDGET
DATE OF BIDDING: July 17, 2006 / 9:00 AM PRE-BID CONFERENCE: July 03, 2006 / 9:00 AM				
D7	QUE-06-16867	Steel Cross Arm and 4 others	1 lot	Php 9,913,657.68
D10	PSMD-S-06-16145	Multiproduct Calibration System	1 set	Php 8,650,000.00
DATE OF BIDDING: JULY 18, 2006 / 9:00 AM PRE-BID CONFERENCE: July 04, 2006 / 9:00 AM				
D13	D3O-06-18920	Potential Transformer	3 sets	Php 2,250,000.00
D14	D3O-06-18011	Capacitor Voltage Transformer	3 sets	Php 2,400,000.00
D15	D3O-06-18027	Gas Circuit Breaker	1 set	Php 3,000,000.00
D16	D3O-06-18885	Switch, Disconnect 3-Way	1 set	Php 3,000,000.00
D17	D3O-06-18880	Current Transformer	6 sets	Php 2,700,000.00

2. The *TRANSCO-SLOM* now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the aforementioned Bid Schedules. Delivery schedule of the GOODS shall be in accordance with the bid documents. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. Interested bidders may obtain further information from the Materials Management Services, TransCo-SLOM and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 A.M. to 12:00 NN and 1:00 to 5:00 P.M. from Monday to Friday.
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from June 14, 2006 to July 14, 2006 at the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of Php 500.00 minimum, or 0.01% of the ABC whichever is higher per bidding schedule. The method of payment will be Cash. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
6. TransCo-SLOM will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on the date and time stated above at the OAVP Conference Room.
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on the date and time stated above. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in any of the forms indicated in Section III Bid Data Sheet of the bid documents, in Philippine Pesos or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted.
8. Bid opening shall be on the date and time stated above at the OAVP Conference Room. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.
9. The *National Transmission Corporate-South Luzon Operations and Maintenance* reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

National Transmission Corporation, South Luzon Operation & Maintenance
Engr. Ruben G. Castuera, BAC Chairman
San Vicente, Biñan, Laguna
Telefax No. (632) 520-6776
Website: www.transco.ph

(Sgd.) R.G. CASTUERA
Chairman, Bids & Awards Committee

(PDI--June 11 & 18, 2006)

ANNOUNCEMENT
FILIPINO – LEBANESE FRIENDSHIP ASSOC.
REG. NO. CN 200413434
we are having an election for the year 2006-2007 on 13th of June 2006, 5:00 PM at LEBANESE CEDAR'S RESTAURANT located in 1738 M. Adriatico St., Malate Manila

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Department of Environment and Natural Resources
Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission
2/F Engineering Building, MWSS Compound
Katipunan Road, Balara, Quezon City
Telephone Nos. +632 9265233; +632 4333446
Telefax Nos.+632 9265234;+632 4333444

INVITATION FOR BIDS

Project: Pasig River Environmental Management and Rehabilitation Sector Development Program (PAREMAR)
Loan No.: Asian Development Bank (ADB) Loan No. 1746-PHI
Description of Works: Site Development and Construction of Four (4) – Storey School Building in Cardinal Sin Village, Punta Sta. Ana, Manila

1. The Government of the Philippines (GOP) has received a loan from the ADB toward the cost of PAREMAR and it intends to apply part of the proceeds of this loan, together with the GOP counterpart funds, to payments under the Contract for Punta Sta. Ana URA Project in Cardinal Sin Village, Punta Sta. Ana, City of Manila
2. The Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC) as the executing agency now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for the following contract packages:

Contract Package	Site Development and Construction of four (4) – Storey School Building Project
Contract No.	URA-MLA-02C
Location	Cardinal Sin Village, Punta Sta. Ana, Manila
Contract Duration	180 Calendar Days
Project Description	Site development and construction of four (4) – storey school building, which include the following items of work: architectural works, structural works, electrical works, carpentry works, painting works, sanitary/plumbing works, water supply, site work, site improvement and drainage work, among others.

3. Interested Bidders shall secure the Bid Documents and submit bids as follows:

Activity	Date	Time	Venue
Securing of (a) Eligibility Checklist or (b) submission of Letter of Intent and purchase of complete set of Bid Documents upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Php 10,500.00	From June 15 to 23, 2006	From 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.	PRRC, 2F MWSS Engineering Bldg. Katipunan Road, Old Balara, Quezon City
Securing of additional eligibility information (if any) and inspection of Bidding Documents	From June 15 to 23, 2006	From 9:00 a.m. 3:00 p.m.	
Site Inspection	June 26, 2006	10:00 a.m.	Cardinal Sin Village, Punta, Santa Ana, City of Manila
Pre-Bid Conference	June 26, 2006	2:00 p.m.	PRRC, 2F MWSS Engineering Bldg. Katipunan Road, Old Balara, Quezon City
Deadline for submission of Bids	July 27, 2006	10:00 a.m.	PRRC, 2F MWSS Engineering Bldg., Katipunan Road, Old Balara, Quezon City
Opening of Bids	July 27, 2006	10:30 a.m.	PRRC, 2F MWSS Engineering Bldg., Katipunan Road, Old Balara, Quezon City

4. The NHA shall be the implementing agency of the Project.
5. Bidding (Eligibility Check/Prequalification, Bid Evaluation and Award of Contract) shall be conducted on the basis of local competitive bidding among interested Bidders from ADB eligible source countries as defined under the *„Guidelines for Procurement by the Asian Development Bank and its Borrowers"* pursuant to the Implementing Rules and Regulations of R.A. No. 9184 **otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," to the extent it is consistent with Asian Development Bank's procedures.**
6. The documents required in the Eligibility Documents shall be submitted as part of the Technical Documents of the Bidders as provided in the Instructions to Bidders.
7. The Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at anytime prior to Contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders

(Sgd.) **BINGLE H.B. GUTIERREZ**
Executive Director

Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission
2F, MWSS Engineering Bldg. Katipunan Road, Old Balara, Quezon City 1105
Tel. Nos. 433-3447 and 926-5234
Email Address: prrc@tri-isys.com
Fax No. 926-5234

(PDI–June 11, 2006)

Department of Environment and Natural Resources
Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission
2/F Engineering Building, MWSS Compound
Katipunan Road, Balara, Quezon City
Telephone Nos. +632 9265233, +632 4333446
Telefax Nos.+632 9265234;+632 4333444

INVITATION FOR BIDS

Project: Pasig River Environmental Management and Rehabilitation Sector Development Program (PAREMAR)
Loan No.: Asian Development Bank (ADB) Loan No. 1746-PHI
Description of Works: Construction and Development of San Joaquin Linear Park cum Ferry Station in Brgy. San Joaquin, Pasig City

1. The Government of the Philippines (GOP) has received a loan from the ADB toward the cost of PAREMAR and it intends to apply part of the proceeds of this loan, together with the GOP counterpart funds, to payments under the Contract for the Construction and Development of San Joaquin Linear Park cum Ferry Station in A. Mendoza Street, Brgy. San Joaquin, Pasig City.
2. The Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC) as the executing agency now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for the following contract package:

Contract Package	Construction and Development of San Joaquin Linear Park cum Ferry Station in Brgy. San Joaquin, Pasig City
Contract No.	EPA-LPP-034
Location	Brgy. San Joaquin, Pasig City
Contract Duration	180 Calendar Days
Project Description	Construction and Development of Linear Park with Ferry Station, which include the following items of work: Siteworks / Earthworks; Site Improvement; Paving and Surfacing; Site Furniture Works; Electrical Works; Drainage Works; Landscaping / Softscaping; Civil Works; Steel Works; Roofing Works; Ceiling Works; Architectural Works; Sanitary / Plumbing Works; Electrical Works; Pontoon Works; Handicap Lift; Geotechnical Survey and Revetment Works.

3. Interested Bidders shall secure the Bid Documents and submit bids as follows:

Activity	Date	Time	Venue
Securing of (a) Eligibility Checklist or (b) submission of Letter of Intent and purchase of complete set of Bid Documents upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Php 12,500.00	From June 19 to June 30 2006	From 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.	PRRC, 2F MWSS Engineering Bldg., Katipunan Road, Old Balara, Quezon City
Securing of additional eligibility information (if any) and inspection of Bidding Documents	From June 19 to June 30, 2006	From 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.	
Site Inspection	July 19, 2006	10:00 a.m.	A. Mendoza St., Brgy. San Joaquin, Pasig City
Pre-Bid Conference	July 19, 2006	2:00 p.m.	PRRC, 2F MWSS Engineering Bldg., Katipunan Road, Old Balara, Quezon City
Deadline for submission of Bids	July 31, 2006	10:00 a.m.	PRRC, 2F MWSS Engineering Bldg., Katipunan Road, Old Balara, Quezon City
Opening of Bids	July 31, 2006	10:30 a.m.	PRRC, 2F MWSS Engineering Bldg., Katipunan Road, Old Balara, Quezon City

4. The Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC) and the City of Pasig shall be the implementing agencies of the Contract.
5. Bidding will be conducted in accordance with relevant procedures for open competitive bidding as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act", to the extent it is consistent with Asian Development Bank's procurement procedures and is open to all Bidders from eligible source countries as defined in the *"Guidelines for Procurement Under Asian Development Bank Loans"*.
6. The documents required in the Eligibility Documents shall be submitted as part of the Technical Documents of the Bidders as provided in the Instructions to Bidders.
7. The Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at anytime prior to Contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders

(Sgd.) **BINGLE H.B. GUTIERREZ**
Executive Director

Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission
2F, MWSS Engineering Bldg. Katipunan Road, Old Balara, Quezon City 1105
Tel. Nos. 433-3447 and 926-5234
Email Address: prrc@tri-isys.com
Fax No. 926-5234

(PDI–June 11, 2006)

PTAA Shooting Contest

THE PHILIPPINE TRAvel Agencies Association (PTAA) together with the City of Manila headed by Mayor Jose L. Atienza, Jr. and Manila Sports Council chairman "Ali" Atienza, the Presidential Assistant for Youth and Sports is calling for the last announcement of PTAA / ACCEL 3-Point and Free Throw shooting contest to be held on June 17 at the San Andres gym in Malate, Manila.

The event is a Sports and Fellowship activity of PTAA to strengthen camaraderie and enhance the relationship among its members as well as friends in the tourism industry. On behalf of the PTAA led by its President Mr. Jose C. Clemente III, the sports and fellowship committee Chairman Mr. Clarence Aytona opens the invitation to its members and to the traveling public.

Registration fee of P150 per category (free throw and 3-point) gives you a chance to win cash prizes: P5,000 for the winner, P3,000 for the second placer and P2,000 for the third placer.

Five hundred participants will be accommodated on a "first come first paid basis" on June 16, 2006. For more details please call the PTAA Secretariat at 552-0026 -28, 0906-472-0370 or 0927-474-5271.

Other sponsors include China Airlines, Lufthansa, British Airways, Asian Spirit, Duty Free, Skynet Travel, Asiana, Cebu Pacific, Macau Government Tourist Office, and Philippine Airlines.

Philippine Amusement & Gaming Corporation
A Global Corporation with a Global Mindset and a Filipino Heart

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

ITB NO.: 05-18-2006BAC

The Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites service contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project : One (1) lot Janitorial Service for Casino Filipino – Bacolod
Brief Description : Annex Building & other strictures of the Casino Filipino Hotel: 6,027.64 sq. mtrs
Slot Machine Arcade at the L'Sea Building: 352 sq. mtrs
Staff House: 200 sq. mtrs.
Required Personnel: 27 janitors (19 - Male, 8 - Female)
Approved Budget : Three Million Forty Eight Thousand & 00/100 Pesos (Php 3,048,000.00)
Source of Fund : Internally Funded

Only suppliers duly registered with PAGCOR shall be allowed to participate in the bidding. Unregistered suppliers must register at the Suppliers Registration & Evaluation Section (SRES), Procurement & Property Department (PPD), 2nd Floor PAGCOR House, 1330 Roxas Blvd., Ermita, Manila., Tel. No. 526-0573 or at the Branch Procurement and Property Office – Casino Filipino-Bacolod.

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Pre-Bid Conference Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	*Schedule*
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	June 9, 2006 – June 30, 2006
2. Pre-Bid Conference	June 19, 2006 (2 pm)
3. Submission of Bids	July 1, 2006 (2 pm)
4. Opening of Bids	July 1, 2006 (2 pm onwards)

Bid documents will be available to prospective bidders upon payment of a non refundable amount of ***One Thousand Five Hundred Twenty Four Pesos (Php 1,524.00)***. In order to secure the documents, bidders should present the Official Receipt issued by our Cashier to the Branch Bids and Awards Committee – Casino Filipino-Bacolod.

PAGCOR assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

PAGCOR reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders

Please address all communications to the Branch Bids and Awards Committee Casino Filipino-Bacolod.

(Sgd) RAMON A. MORENO
Chairperson, BBAC Casino Filipino-Bacolod

(PDI - June 11 & 18, 2006)

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Trunkline: 818-2200 locals 410/423

INVITATION TO BID

LBP Leasing Corporation invites prospective bidders to participate in the public bidding of the following foreclosed asset on an **"AS IS, WHERE IS"** basis.

Description	Location	Minimum Bid
Real Properties		
1.) Lot w/ Warehouse LA 10,000 sq.m. FA 980 sq.m.	San Leonardo, NE	P 7,715,500.00
2.) Lot - 10,000 sq.m.	Maharlika Hway Lucena City	P 14,500,000.00
Chattels		
4 units Daewoo Aircon Buses	Meycauayan Bulacan	P 4,000,000.00

1. Sealed proposals together with the 10% bid bond for the purchase on CASH BASIS will be received at the office of LBP Leasing not later than 10:00 am on June 22, 2006 at which place, date & time, said proposals will be opened in the presence of attending bidders.
2. Prospective bidders are enjoined to inspect the above-listed properties before submitting their bids. Interested bidder shall first secure an Authority to inspect the asset from the office of LBP Leasing Corporation.

LBP Leasing Corporation reserves the right to accept or reject any or all applications, to impose additional terms and conditions it may deem proper, to waive minor formality relative to the conduct of this bid, and award the asset to the bidder whose bids are most advantageous to the Corporation.

Committee on Asset Disposal

(PDI–June 11, 2006)

NFA Kidapawan buys more sugar

LOW INCOME EARNERS PARTICUlarly in Metro Manila are assured of having access to affordable refined sugar as the National Food Authority further intensify raw sugar buying in the provinces.

In North Cotabato, the NFA has already procured 1,311 Lkg of "B-2" sugar worth P1.2 million from planters associations and cooperatives in the province. "B-2" is the classification given to raw sugar exclusively for sale to NFA.

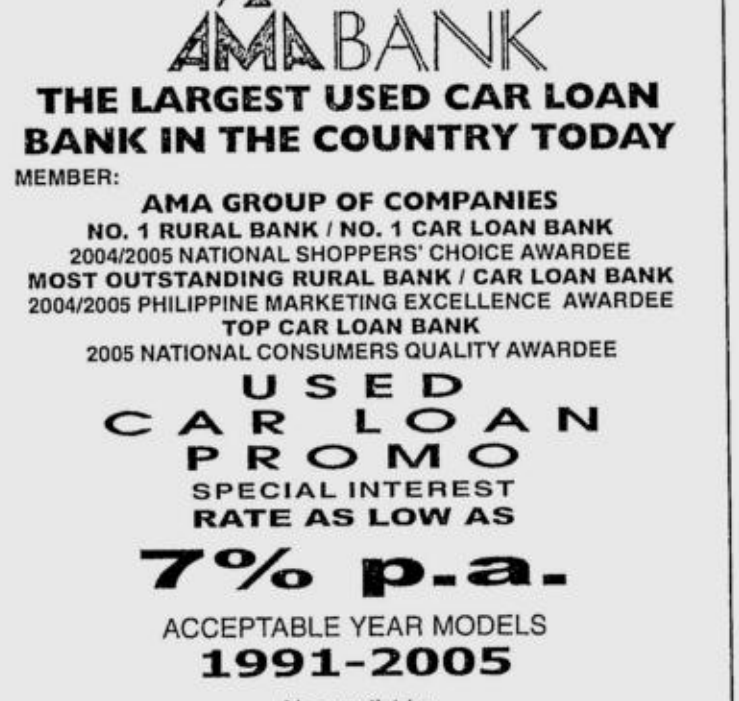
NFA North Cota-bato manager Fernando S. Nuñez informed the NFA procures con-solidated "B-2" quedans or block quedanning of planters associations and cooperatives. Sugar planters who are not members or not affiliated with any association can request that quedanning of their sugar be joined with an association of their choice in order for the NFA to buy their produce.

Nuñez added that for non affiliated sugar planters who opt to join with the mill, the mill now serves as their association. The local Sugar Regulatory Administration, however, should certify that their quedan is purely planter's share, Nuñez said.

He informed they have procured sugar from sugar planters, associations, cooperatives and sugar mills company including Cotabato Alliance of Sugarcane Producers and Growers Inc., Cotabato Sugarcane Planters MPC, Samahang Sugarcane Planters Inc., United Sugarcane Planters of Davao, High Yield Sugar Farms Corporation and Cotabato Sugar Central Company Incorporated.

NFA buys sugar at P950 per Lkg. Monitoring teams, Nuñez said, regularly inspect the sugar mills to keep track of and secure inventories.

For comments, suggestions, queries and complaints on NFA sugar procurement contact Txt NFA through mobile number 0917-6210927.



BRITISH AMBASSADOR WITNESSES UK-FUNDED NFA'S E-AUCTION

National Food Authority Administrator Gregorio Y. Tan, Jr. (right) explains to British Ambassador Peter Beckingham the agency's electronic auction which the United Kingdom funded with a grant of £39,303 to purchase computer softwares and hardwares. The e-Auction is held simultaneously in separate locations nationwide to enable bidders from Metro Manila and the provinces to participate in public biddings without leaving their respective areas. The British government assisted the auction program to expand it nationwide. With Administrator Tan and Ambassador Beckingham are other key officials of the NFA.

TransCo ready for privatization

THE NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORporation reiterated its readiness for privatization following the announcement by the Institute of Corporate Directors' (ICD) that the state-owned firm landed in the top 5 in terms of corporate governance among the country's state-owned enterprises (SOE).

ICD is a non-profit organization promoting corporate governance reform and professional corporate directorship in the Philippines.

TransCo President Alan Ortiz said everyone in TransCo from the rank and file up to the board members are honored and inspired by the recognition conferred by the ICD.

"This is a testament to our continuing efforts to institute and improve corporate governance mechanisms in the way we do things. The future concessionaire of TransCo will find that everything is already in place when he comes in," Ortiz said.

"We have always strived to be the best we can be. All our regional Operation and Maintenance Groups as well as key functional groups have ISO 9001:2000-certified quality management systems. We want to turn over TransCo to the private concessionaire on a platinum platter," Ortiz added.

Results of ICD's first-ever Corporate Governance Scorecard for Government-owned and Controlled Corporations and Government Financial Institutions (CGS-GOCCs/GFIs) showed that TransCo was the highest-ranked GOCC as all the top four placers are government financial institutions (GFIs). There were 31 Philippine GOCCs/GFIs that participated in the survey. TransCo is the youngest corporation in the group at a mere five (5) years old.

Supported by the British Embassy, the Capital Market Development Council (CMDC) and Governance Advisory Council of the President of the Philippines, the CGS covered five major concerns of corporate governance in SOEs: 1) the state acting as an Owner, 2) relations with stakeholders, 3) transparency, 4) disclosure, and 5) responsibilities of the boards of state-owned enterprises.

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PCCI
ALL-BREEDS DOG SHOW
Thunderbirds en Fontera Nerde Ortigas Cor C-5 Pasig City
June 17 & 18, 2006
UNDER INT'L JUDGES
Mr. Tomoyuki Iwamoto (Japan)
Mr. John Stanton (New Zealand)
STRICTLY NO ADD'L/DEM
Dog Show Schedule
Saturday A.M. June 17, 2006
TERRIER
DACHSHUNDS
RETRIEVERS
SIGHTHOUNDS
Saturday 1:30 P.M.
COMPANION & TOY DOGS
Scent hounds & Related Dogs
Sunday A.M. June 18, 2006
SHEEPDOGS & CATTLE DOGS
SPITZS & PRIMITIVE TYPES
Sunday 1:30 P.M.
PINSCHER & SCHNAUZER
Sponsors
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PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is herby given that the Estate of EDUARDO T. SUVA who died intestate was settled extra-judicially among heirs before Notary Public Atty. Ruben T.M. Ramirez of Makati City Doc.#498;Page#101; Book#101,Series of 2006. (PDI-June 11,18 & 25'06)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late Wenifreda U. Canon was extrajudicially settled among her heirs as per Doc. 281, Page 57, Book III, Series of 2006 before Notary Public Atty Jose T Gamace of Taguig City (PDI-May 28, June 4, 11, 2006)

Notice is hereby given that Philex Mining "B" Certificate No. B0194605-84, 750 share under Peter Chua was declared lost. If no contest received in 1yr. new certificate will be issued (PDI-June 11, 18, 25, 2006)

Notice is hereby given that ACR-I CARD No.E207230 issued to Mr. YOSHIHIKO SATO were declared lost. If found please return to Clark Premiere Industrial park, Inc. M.A. Roxas Highway, CSEZ, Clark Field, Pampanga or contact Ms. Tin Palo at (045)599-5340 • 599-5269. (PDI - June 11, 2006)

Notice is hereby given that EXPORT AND INDUSTRY BANK, INC. Stock Certificate#2305 with 135,000 shares issued to Celia V. Kong was declared lost. If no contest is received, new certificate will be issued. (PDI- June 11, 18 & 25, 2006)

Notice is hereby given that Commonwealth Foods, Inc. Cert.#504 for 500 shares,#505 for 500 shares;#506 for 500 shares,#567 for 20 shares & #905 for 846 shares issued in the name of Dee K. Chiong were reported lost. If no contest received, new certificates will be issued. (PDI-June 11,18 & 25, 2006)

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is hereby given that ACR-I CARD No.E207230 issued to Mr. YOSHIHIKO SATO were declared lost. If found please return to Clark Premiere Industrial park, Inc. M.A. Roxas Highway, CSEZ, Clark Field, Pampanga or contact Ms. Tin Palo at (045)599-5340 • 599-5269. (PDI - June 11, 2006)

PUBLIC NOTICES

PERSONAL

PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT
Holy Spirit thou who make me see everything and show me the way to reach my ideal. You who give me the divine gift to forgive and forget the wrong that is done to me and who are in all instances of my life with me. I, in this short dialogue, want to thank You for everything and confirm once more that I never want to be separated from You, no matter how great the material desires maybe. I want to be with You and my loved ones in Your Perpetual Glory. Amen.
G. S. T.

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CAMP GEN EMILIO AGUINALDO HIGH SCHOOL (CGEAHS) BATCH 1985 REUNION

Call all CGEAHS Batch '85. We will have our 1st reunion after 20 years set on December 17, 2006. You may log on to www.cgeahs.com or call Ms. Aileen Academia-Garcia at 438-3309 or 0920-9115081 or Mr. Carlos M. Barlisan 0918-6530404 Let's reminisce our BAGETS "Just got lucky..." Days!

The Directors, Officers and Staff of the

Philippine National Bank

mourn the untimely demise of

FIRST SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT and TREASURER

SYLVIA CHAN LIM

who peacefully joined her Creator on June 8, 2006
in San Francisco, California, USA.

She is survived by her bereaved children **Neil Vincent** and **Ana Andrea**, mother **Agueda Ng Chan**, mother-in-law **Chua Puay**, brothers **Casiano** & **Loreta Chan**, **Francisco** & **Veronica Chan**, **Nicolas** & **Perla Chan**, sisters **Editha** & **Jimmy Go**, **Josefa Nellie** & **Anderson Tan**, **Violeta** & **Allan Scott**.

We join her family, relatives, friends and pious readers in praying for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body will lie in state at the Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Shrine – Parish, 5th St., Doña J. Rodriguez Avenue, New Manila, Quezon City on Friday, June 16, 2006.

Interment will be on Wednesday, June 21, 2006 at The Heritage Park, Bayani Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at the Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Shrine – Parish.

In lieu of flowers, check donations may be accepted payable to ***The Cancer Institute Foundation, Inc.***

The Directors, Officers and Staff of the

PNB Remittance Centers, Inc.

extend their deepest sympathies to the family of

SYLVIA CHAN LIM

DIRECTOR

who passed away in the grace of our Lord on June 8, 2006
in San Francisco, California, USA.

We join her family, relatives, friends and pious readers in praying for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body will lie in state at the Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Shrine – Parish, 5th St., Doña J. Rodriguez Avenue, New Manila, Quezon City on Friday, June 16, 2006.

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In lieu of flowers, check donations may be accepted payable to ***The Cancer Institute Foundation, Inc.***

RICARDO R. SAMONTE

January 4, 1917 - June 9, 2006

Peacefully joined his CREATOR and beloved son VER at the age of 89.

His bereaved wife, JUANITA, his children and in-laws: VER (†) & LANI SAMONTE, ESTELLA & VENANCIO VICTORIA, EMILY & ANSELMO (†) PADUA, Grandchildren: JOEY & KAYE, FATHER RONALDO GBOI, ROWENA & CHOY, REUBEN & MARICEL, CHECHE & REX, DJON & JOAD, & JENNY, Great Grandchildren: KARLO MIGUEL, ALYNNA, SHAINE, EIN & JAM, and all his brothers and sisters, relatives and friends request the readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Sto. Niño Chapel (near Malolos Cathedral), Sto. Niño, Malolos, Bulacan.

Interment will be on Tuesday, June 13, 2006 at the Legacy Memorial Park, Malolos, Bulacan after the 2 p.m. mass at Sto. Niño Chapel, Malolos, Bulacan.

ATTY. LUIS SALVADOR CAPULONG

(San Simon, Pampanga and Quezon City)

Has peacefully joined his Creator on June 9, 2006 at the age of 78.

His loving wife **Tessie Dizon Capulong** (former RTC Judge Valenzuela City and former Asst. City Fiscal Manila) his daughter **Ditas Capulong Tia**, his son **Ric Ric (†)**; his son-in-law **Dojo Tia**, his grandchildren **Andros, Ushuaia** and **Esquiline** request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Imperial Chapel of La Funeraria Paz, Inc., 143 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment shall be on Thursday, June 15, 2006 after the 9:00 A.M. Mass.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life."

John 3:16

CLASSIFIEDS

BCDA BREAKS GROUND FOR SCTEX TOLL OPERATION CENTER

The Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA), together with the Hazama-Taisei-Nippon Steel (HTN) Joint Venture and Pacific Consultants International-Katahira & Engineers International, Nippon Koei Co., Ltd. (PCI-KEI-NK) Joint Venture, recently conducted the groundbreaking of the Toll Operation Center (TOC) of the Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway (SCTEx).

The groundbreaking ceremony was held at Brgy. Cacutud, Mabalacat, Pampanga led by SCTEx Program Manager for Engineering and Construction BGen Roberto Dimayuga (Ret), HTN-JV Project Manager Junio Kimata and Local Resident Engineer for Package 2 Marcelo Gomez.

The TOC will have the following amenities: a central control room, cash country room, public reception area, area of police operation, staff recreation and utility areas, secured cash transfer area and maintenance room. It will serve as the nerve center of the tollway operation of the SCTEx. Its construction will solidify BCDA's position to complete the project on time.

The SCTEx is seen as the backbone of a new economic frontier in the Central Luzon region. Once completed, it will position the country as the premier transport and logistics hub in the Asia-Pacific region.

Cooperatives as outsourcing channel: Legal or illegal?

THE PROLIFERATION OF CONTRACTING AND SUBCONTRACTING arrangements in the world of work these days has resulted in the use of cooperatives as an outsourcing channel.

The foremost question though that needs clarification with respect to such practice is – Is it outrightly legal or illegal?

There are still other questions that have to be addressed: Does this type of cooperative serve its function vis-à-vis service to its members and the community? Or is this a new outsourcing scheme in the guise of a cooperative? Is this within the bounds of law?

It is in these context that the Employers Confederation of the Philippines (ECOP) is slated to conduct a forum on cooperatives as an outsourcing channel.

The forum will be held at the ECOP Center on June 13, 2006. Among the resource persons are Rolly Tuason of Asia Pro Cooperatives; lawyer Giovanni Melgar, president of the Philippine Association of Local Service Contractors (PALSCON); and Director Hans Cacdac of the National Conciliation and Mediation Board (NCMB).

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- **TEMPORARY ELECTRICIAN**

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- **H.E. MECHANIC OFFICERS**
  - High school graduate, w/ 3 yrs exp in warehouse, records maintenance and have knowledge in mechanical material with technical specification.
  - Must have knowledge in using computer word process, database and spreadsheet program and must be proficient in reading, writing and speaking English.
- **H.E. PLANT ELECTRICIAN**
- **TOWER CRANE OPERATORS**
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Nigeria Plant Project

- **MILLWRIGHTS**
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* Must have at least 3 to 5 yrs exp. in the positions applied for.
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Note: Final Interview is on June 13 to 16, 2006
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Job Title	Age	Job Specification	Duty
Mechl. Engrs.	35-45	1. Min. 15 yrs working career in Oil & Chemical area 2. Working exp in oil & Chemical processing work (skilled Coordination, supervising, Quantity Survey & Documentation job). 3. Experienced in overseas Engineering Company.	1. Documentation of PQ & preparation of Technl proposal 2. Teaching technl knowledge, Back-up and ordinary orientation Junior staff. 3. Making MOM report at the meeting with overseas company
Electl. Engrs.	40-45	1. Min 10 yrs working career of designing work in Electl area 2. Working exp in Power Plant & Chemical Plant area 3. Making & Preparation of Engineering Items Spec and skilled in surveying works. 4. Good at Engineering Coordination job	
Electl. Engrs.	40-45	1. Min. 15 yrs in Electrical Engineering works.	1. Engineering Coordination work with client and overseas PJ
Mechl. Engrs	40-45	1. Min. 10-15 yrs working career in areas of Piping design 2. Preparation & reviewing of Technical Spec. 3. Reviewing ITB flow & able to make Questionnaire sheet 4. Checking the contract & possible to do Coordination work.	1. Documentation Engineer
Mechl. Engrs	40-45	1. Able to do HVAC Control work	
Mechl. Engrs	40-45	1. Min. 15 yrs working exp in Chemical-Mechanical area 2. Skilled in EPC Contractor Design area 3. Experienced in Centrifugal Compressor design Purchasement Service Work. 4. Skilled in API Code Work. 5. Working career in Package Item Design & Purchase Service.	
Mechl. Engrs	40-45	1. Min. 20 yrs. working career in H.E. area 2. Mechanical Engineer (UK)	1. Reviewing & Picking-up of Equipment type & spec. by the standard PJ procedure at the estimation or site mobilization & keeping & updating outstanding portion f the estimation.
Mechl. Engrs	below 40	1. Able to make and prepare Technical proposal.	Estimate (Technical proposal work), min. 5 yrs. working career in Oil & Gas PJ area.
Mechl. Engrs	below 40	1. Skilled in Primavera P3 3.1 or P3 Enterprise Software work. 2. Experienced in Oil-Chemical Plant Planning & Scheduling.	Scheduler (min. 5 yrs. working career in oil & gas area
Civil Engineer	35-40	1. Based on engineering experience of Worldwide Plant Construction PJ	Engineering product review & check engineering document execution.
Arch. Engineer	35-40	1. Based on Engineering exp of Worldwide Plant Const. PJ 2. Building Structural Engineer or Architectural Engineer.	ditto

APPLY NOW PERSONALLY TO:

Note: Final Interview is on June 13 to 16, 2006

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MEET THE EMPLOYER FROM THE U.S. FOR PRE-SCREENING AND INTERVIEW.
COME TO THE **FREE SEMINAR ON THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS** ON THE FOLLOWING DATES & VENUES:

MANILA: June 12, 13 & 14, 2006 (Mon, Tues & Wed), 1:00-6:00 pm, AIM Conference Center, Benavidez corner Trasierra Sts., Legaspi Village, Makati City

ILOILO: June 16, 2006 (Fri), 1:00-6:00 pm, Plaza Amigo Hotel, J.M. Basa Street, Iloilo City

CEBU: June 21 & 22, 2006 (Wed & Thurs), 1:00-6:00 pm, Cebu City Marriot Hotel, Cardinal Rosales Avenue, Cebu City

Registration starts at 12:00 noon.
Pre-register by sending resume to
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Or call the following: 0917.835.54.16 (Mia); 0927.663.43.53 (Iloilo); 0927.485.69.89 (Cebu)

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MPL INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION
2/F Victoria Bldg., 429 United Nations Ave.
Ermita, Manila, Tel. Nos. 5260891, 5260984
POEA License No. 067-LB-031899-R

COMPANY DRIVER

- Not less than 35 years old and must be familiar in Metro Manila and can drive automatic transmission car.
- Applicants living in the area of Malate, Pasay, Las Pinas, or nearby Cities will be given priority.

APPLICANTS SHOULD APPLY PERSONALLY TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS

The Katipunan ng Maykapansanan sa Pilipinas, Inc. (KAMPI) - the national federation of 242 grassroots organizations of persons with disabilities in the Philippines and the Danish Society of Polio and Accident Victims (PTU) which have been implementing a rehabilitation project for disabled children dubbed Breaking Barriers for Children (BBC) invites applicants for the position of

Project Technical Assistant (PTA)

with the following terms of reference:

1. Assists the national project director in all areas of project operations particularly in the technical aspect.
2. Establish a baseline research on the basic sectoral data which are essential for furthering the activities of the KAMPI/PTU project.
3. Conduct policy research on existing legislations that influence programs for children with disabilities and operations of government organizations and agencies responsible for children.
4. Prepare the social impact assessment of target areas prior to the establishment of disability-related projects in coordination with the National Social Programme Coordinator.
5. Responsible in the preparation of training modules relevant to the capacity building activities for persons with disabilities and their families.
6. Responsible in the preparation of reports to project funders
7. Represent the project in meetings which are relevant to the KAMPI/ PTU project
8. Develop project proposals for funding that can strengthen the KAMPI/PTU project to ensure its sustainability
9. Prepare regular updates and reports to be submitted to PTU.
10. Supervise the technical aspect of project operation.
11. Perform such other tasks as the project director may assign from time to time.

Qualifications:

1. A graduate of a relevant degree with at least 5 years of experience in project development and management
2. Excellent IT skills particularly with MS Office applications
3. Demonstrates ability to work within a team environment
4. Good interpersonal skills
5. Fluent in verbal and written English
6. Ability to adapt to changing environment
7. Interest or experience in development related fields - particularly in disability and development
8. Working knowledge of multilateral and bilateral donor agencies an advantage

The project offers competitive remuneration; opportunities for foreign travel and other perks to the deserving applicant.

Application letter and comprehensive resume may be sent to the BBC Project Office c/o Unit 701 Merchant Square Condominium, 1386 E. Rodriguez Sr. Ave corner Mabolo St., Quezon City or email it at bbc701@surfshop.net.ph

A PROGRESSIVE NATIONAL COOPERATIVE BANK BASED IN MAKATI CITY NEEDS A

VICE-PRESIDENT

INTERESTED PARTIES MAY SUBMIT LETTER OF INTENT, BIO-DATA OR COMPLETE RESUME NOT LATER THAN **JULY 15, 2006** TO:

ATTN: EXECUTIVE SEARCH COMMITTEE
POSITION: VP - COOPERATIVE BANK
BOX NO. MN-001-06
c/o CLASSIFIEDS DIVISION
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
1098 CHINO ROCES AVE., MAKATI CITY

EVA AIRWAYS CORPORATION

Is in immediate need of

Reservation Staffs

Qualifications:
- Male/Female
- Under 25 years old
- College graduate
- Fluent in English (preferably Mandarin speaking)
- With pleasing personality, independent and aggressive
- Knowledgeable in Microsoft Word, Excel and Powerpoint
- Resides in Manila, Makati, Alabang,Paranaque, Las Pinas and Quezon City.

Please send your resume on or before June 19, 2006.

Personnel Department
EVA AIRWAYS CORPORATION
23rd Floor, LKG Tower
6801 Ayala Ave., Makati City

WRANGLER JEANS NEEDS:

Someone below 27 years of age, with pleasing personality, hardworking, has good communication skill, a teamworker and of good moral character.

DESIGNER/GRAPHIC ARTIST

- Graduate of Bachelor's / College Degree in Art & Design, Advertising / Media or equivalent
- At least one (1) year of working experience in the related field
- Sensitive to fashion trends
- Creative, good aesthetic taste, and can work with minimum supervision
- Has SOLID graphics designing background using ADOBE PHOTOSHOP, ILLUSTRATOR, COREL DRAW and other graphic software

Please apply in person or send resumé with photo to:

7th floor, BMMC Building
Dela Rosa St., Legaspi Village
Makati City

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1) w/ pleasing personality
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3) w/ experience working in a law firm

Interested applicants are requested to submit their applications & resumés at:

Suite 806, Park Trade Center Bldg.
1716 Investment Drive
Madrigal Business Park
Alabang, Muntinlupa City.
Tel. # 772-2591(92)
Look for Ms. Barbara Sala

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MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTANT (MA 06)

These roles work closely with members of the Financial accounting group located in various offices around the Asia Pacific region.

Suitable candidates will be someone with a strong background in accounting and finance. Professional accounting qualification (CPA, ACCA or local equivalent) and previous involvement in Management Accounting and/or Business Analysis preferred. They should have good communication skills, both written and verbal, and be able to converse with staff of all levels fluently in English. They should be self-motivated, flexible and be able to demonstrate that they are capable of being managed remotely. Computer literacy is extremely important and the person should have good knowledge of Excel (Macro Level), Word and Financial accounting packages (knowledge of Peoplesoft Financials a plus).

Software Engineer (SE 06)

The successful candidate will be responsible for the design and development of applications that would provide business and process efficiencies, to include collection of various production metrics in terms of quality, timeliness, productivity and output by automating existing processes.

A suitable candidate will be someone who has at least 3 years solid IT experience in Software Development. Technical Support experience would be an advantage. Strong knowledge in the following programming languages, namely Visual Basic 6.0 with .NET relevant experience, C++, RDMBS experience, MS SQL server/client 2000 (ORACLE9i DB Experience a plus), MS Access 2000. Hands on knowledge of Windows 2000 server/Professional and XP, Web Server (IIS) configuration and architecture. Expertise on Web Technologies especially HTML and WEB scripting languages such as JavaScript, J2EE, JDBC, ASP, XML with .NET relevant experience. A Recognized IT certification would be an advantage. The person should be service and team oriented. Has the ability to think logically and communicate clearly and diplomatically. Has excellent communication and interpersonal skills.

Language Specialist (LS 06)

We are also in need of Bi-lingual Analysts who are fluent in <u>any one</u> of the following foreign languages: **Spanish, German, Italian, French, Cantonese, Mandarin, Japanese, Indonesian and Korean.** *This position is open to new graduates of any course.*

CLIENT SERVICES EXECUTIVE (CSE 06)

As part of the Global Customer Care team, you will be providing product support to clients in Asia Pacific, London (UK) and US for our range of products in portfolio management, order management and performance measurement. Responsibilities include technical and product support; administrative maintenance of client information and troubleshooting client issues in a stand-alone and group environment. Candidates should possess financial industry knowledge, strong organizational skills, be self-motivated and demonstrate a professional attitude. Good communication and inter-personal skills are pre-requisites plus the ability to work autonomously as well as part of the global team. Working knowledge of Unix, Windows NT, Sybase or Microsoft SQL Server is desirable but not necessary.

The successful candidate should ideally have a good understanding of capital markets and financial institutions' middle and back office operations as well as 1 to 2 years related Customer Support work experience. The successful candidate is also expected to take ***graveyard shifts*** *to accommodate clients from UK and US clients.*

RESEARCH ANALYSTS - ENGLISH (EA 06)

Successful candidates will be responsible for research, analysis and content processing of various financial and business-related data. Preferably graduates of business-related courses, open to new graduates. Should be fluent in both written and spoken English. Proficiency in Microsoft Office programs and Internet usage is needed. Should be detail oriented, motivated and should have good problem solving and customer service skills. Candidates must be able to demonstrate the ability to handle multiple priorities and be willing to work in shifts including the graveyard shift.

If you are ready to take the challenge and work in a dynamic company, please send your application letter together with your resumé, indicating the ***<u>position code</u>*** *you are applying for, your expected salary, transcript of records and recent 2x2 photo on or before* ***16 June 2006*** *to:*

The Human Resources Group
The Thomson (Philippines) Corporation
20th Floor, Ayala Life-FGU Center
6811 Ayala Ave.
1200 Makati City
E-mail: tf-recruitment-ph@thomson.com
Career website:
http://thomson.taleo.net

We offer an attractive remuneration package, a five-day work week, retirement plan, allowances, annual leave days, medical, dental and life insurance coverage.

Only short listed applicants will be notified. Resumes will be filed for future reference and handled in the strictest confidence. <u>Previous applicants need not apply.</u>

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Job summary
- Provides World Class Customer Service for the members of our Multi Award-Winning Loyalty Program
- Delivers Individualized Customer Experiences by focusing on finding hotel accommodations that will best fit our guests needs

Requirements
- Must be a Bachelor/College degree holder
- Must have excellent written and verbal communication skills with one of the following languages: English, Spanish or Arabic
- Customer service and/or sales experience an advantage
- Education and experience in the hospitality or IT industry an advantage
- Must be willing to work on a rotating shift

Other available positions:
E-Masters Specialists, Hotel Performance Specialists and Distribution Services Coordinators.

ABOUT US

With more than 3,800 hotels in 6 continents across more than 100 countries, WE are the most global Hotel Company.

Our frequent stayer program is the largest in the world with 26 million members to date!

Our compensation and benefits are considered one of the best in the industry and employees enjoy room discount privileges in all of our hotel brands around the world!

CONTACT US

ADDRESS	29/F, Tower II, RCBC Plaza 6819 Ayala Avenue, Makati City
TEL	857-8800
EMAIL	phlro.resumes@ichotelsgroup.com
WEBSITE	www.ichotelsgroup.com

Walk-in applicants are welcome.
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MEETS
Business Center
The Richmonde Hotel
San Miguel Ave., Pasig City
(We are not a recruitment agency)

CAMERAMEN
AUDIOMEN
LIGHTMEN

Requirements:
1. Not over 40 years old
2. Male
3. **Must have knowledge in Broadcast Equipment**
4. Preferably with experience in TV production

Please submit/hand-carry your resumé at the address below:

TAPE, Inc.
79 Xavierville Avenue,
Loyola Heights, Quezon City

Tulong! Sulong!

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Social Welfare and Development
Batasan Pambansa Complex, Constitution Hills
Quezon City
Telephone Nos. 931-8101 to 07
http://www.dswd.gov.ph

NOTICE OF VACANCY

The Legal Service of the Department of Social Welfare and Development has a vacant **Legal Officer V (Salary Grade 24) position under Contract of Service** with the following qualification standard:

Education	Bachelor of Laws
Experience	2 years in position/s involving management and supervision
Training	8 hours of training in management and supervision
Eligibility	RA 1080 (BAR)
Additional requirement	At least 3 years practice in land registration cases and willing to travel extensively across the country

Interested applicants may submit their application and comprehensive resumé with 2x2 ID picture to the Director, Legal Service, DSWD on or before June 23, 2006.

(Sgd.) **MARIE ANGELA S. GOPALAN**
Director, HRMDS

NTFP Exchange Programme

The **Non-Timber Forest Products – Task Force**, a nationwide network of grassroots NGOs and Peoples' is in search of personnel for a project involving the capability building of intermediaries and producers of indigenous crafts and the strengthening of its marketing arm, the CustomMade Crafts Center (CMCC).

ASSISTANT BUSINESS MANAGER

Key Responsibilities :

Manage and oversee the general operations and growth of CMCC; Lead in Marketing and Product Development; Supervise and provide troubleshooting to all CMCC staff.

Qualifications:

College degree in business management or related field required; Minimum of 5 years of experience in the implementation of livelihood and rural business management projects, preferably in crafts business; Minimum of 3 years experience in program coordination; Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of enterprise management; Previous experience in managing a business preferable; Strong networking skills

EXPORT SALES OFFICER

Key Responsibilities:

Manage and develop overseas accounts, including coordinating with sales agents and partners abroad; Process orders coming from abroad including preparation of documents; Coordinate with various parties internally and externally on all export requirements; Provide assistance to Asst. Business Manager on all export related matters.

Qualifications:

Degree in Marketing or related field; 2-3 years experience in sales with focus on exporting; Good command of both written and spoken English required; knowledgeable on customs and export procedures

Submit resume (with two references) and cover letter indicating the position your are applying for to NTFP-TF, 92-A Masikap Ext., Central Diliman, Quezon City or e-mail ntfp.ep@gmail.com. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered. Only short-listed candidates will be contacted for an interview. For complete listing of responsibilities and qualifications, see www.ntfp.org. The **closing date for applications** is on **17 June 2006**.

CJH Development Corporation
CAMP JOHN HAY

The developer of Camp John Hay, Baguio City's premier forest-tourism resort, announces the following:

JOB OPENING
Executive Secretary
(Legal and Corporate Secretary)

• Minimum Qualifications •

Female, Single, Graduate of any Bachelor's degree, At least 2 years work experience in the field of Legal and Corporate Services, Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, Able to organize and transmit data and documents systematically & efficiently, Can work under minimal supervision, Proficient in Windows-based programs, Capable of dealing with various clients on a professional level.

For interested applicants, submit the following requirements with a Letter of Application to the Human Resource Department, Camp John Hay Development Corp., 5/F Renaissance Tower, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City not later than **16 June 2006:** Comprehensive Resumé with at least one contact number, 2x2 ID Picture, SSS Number, Tax Identification Number and Certificate/s of Employment.

Look for **Regina Q. Culzon** or e-mail your requirements to **cjhhumanresource@yahoo.com**

CYPRESS Bomanite
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A family owned corporation, engaged in construction and landscaping and has been in the business for 34 years is seeking professionals who can contribute to the expansion plans of the company is in need of

CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER

Qualifications:
- Licensed Civil Engineer w/ at least 5 years experience in a related field
- Full time position w/ competitive salary & benefits for qualified applicants
- Knowledgeable in CAD, MS Office
- Driving skills is advantage

Interested applicants may send their application through email: cypressbomanite@yahoo.com
or submit their resume at

537 Edsa, Cubao, Quezon City

POSITION SOUGHT BY A START-UP CONSULTING COMPANY FOR JOB IN PROJECT MANAGEMENT:

COMMUNICATIONS SUPERVISOR/MANAGER
COMMUNICATIONS ASSISTANT/CONSULTANT

REQUIREMENTS FOR CANDIDATE:
- 23-35 years old
- Good education
- Preferably female
- Ideal candidate has basic work experience for at least 2-3 years in sales, client relations or call center operations (preferably has worked in bank, hotel or service industry)
- Good communication skills and strong command of the English language
- Good PC skills, particularly in Excel
- Independent, open-minded and motivated individual
- Organized and results oriented, and is a team-player
- Works with minimum supervision

Interested parties, please send resumé via email to career110track@yahoo.com

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (CONSULTANT SERVICES)

PHILIPPINES
CAPACITY BUILDING FOR CARBON FINANCE
ENVIRONMENT/CLIMATE CHANGE
CONSULTING SERVICES
Project ID No. P070278
Expressions of interest

The Government of the Philippines is party to the Kyoto Protocol which includes the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) a mechanism that allows industrialized countries to provide financing to projects in developing countries that are able to monitor and independently verify the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, and demonstrate the project contributes to sustainable development. To enhance the opportunities for the Philippines to benefit from the CDM, the World Bank is undertaking a program to provide experience and training in the development of projects to be eligible under the CDM. The World Bank intends to apply part of the proceeds of the Capacity Building for Carbon Finance program for the following three separate contracts for consultant services:

I. Contract for services for the preparation of sector studies and support to project intermediaries: The consultant would: (i) Assess CDM opportunities in key sectors, identification of sector-based approaches to CDM compliance and development of concepts for selected projects. (ii) Work with foundations, banks, government entities and other groups to develop business models for technical, financial and administrative intermediation of CDM-eligible projects. Prospective consultants should be a firm or consortium with experience in sector studies in Asia, the CDM and management or institutional consulting to government and foundations in the Philippines.

II. Contract for Project Validation services: Validation of approximately 4-6 projects under the rules of Kyoto Protocol. Prospective consultants should be a firm or consortium and must, in accordance with the rules of the Kyoto Protocol, be Applicant Entities or accredited and provisionally Designated Operational Entities to provide project Validation services under sectoral scopes for waste handing and disposal, afforestation and reforestation, chemical industries, energy industries (renewable - / non-renewable sources) and manufacturing industries.

III. Contract for CDM document preparation services: The development of documents for qualification of approximately 6 projects under the CDM rules including Project Idea Notes and Project Design Documents. Prospective consultants should be a firm or consortium and must have relevant experience in preparing CDM documentation.

Consultants interested in providing one or more of the above services must provide information indicating the contract of interest and that they are qualified to perform the services (brochures, description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions, availability of appropriate skills among staff, etc.). Consultants may associate to enhance their qualifications. The consultants will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out in the World Bank's *Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants by World Bank Borrowers* (current edition).

Interested consultants may obtain further information at the address below during office hours (*0900 to 1700 hours*)

Expressions of interest must be delivered or submitted electronically at the address below by **June 26, 2006.**

Paper submissions:
Attn: Josefo Tuyor
World Bank Office-Manila
20th Floor, Taipan Place, F. Ortigas Jr. Ave. (Formerly Emerald Avenue)
Ortigas Center, Pasig City
Tel. No. 02- 9173086
E-mail submissions: jtuyor@worldbank.org
Web site submissions: www.worldbank.org/econsult

AN "INDUSTRIAL" STOCK OWNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY IN MARKETING AND SALES NEEDED: AN OVERALL MARKETING HEAD

We are looking for an entrepreneurially-oriented overall Head for Marketing and Sales to handle the marketing operations of a group of companies with a diverse product line which includes health-care products, personal-care products and intangible products. This is wonderful opportunity for highly ambitious and highly experienced marketing heads who would now like the opportunity to become an owner of the business they work for. He will organize and handle a sales network that will operate on a nationwide basis under an existing online branch network in 30 key cities. The qualifications are as follows:

- Male or Female and a graduate of a reputable business school, MBA is a plus
- Must be able to organize an extensive sales organization very fast and has at least 3 solid years of experience doing this on a "hands on" basis
- Can handle a multi-channel distribution network involving nationwide direct selling, multilevel marketing (both binary and unilevel), telemarketing, and mail marketing
- Extensive experience in "personal care and health care" products is a plus
- Must have held at least a "hands-on" senior executive level marketing position for at least 3 years with an impressive and proven track record in sales
- Must be totally hands on, results-oriented, skilled in dealing with people, and very entrepreneurially-oriented
- Must be able to handle and distribute a wide array of products both tangible and intangible
- Can operate and think "out of the box" like a total entrepreneur
- Is interested in bio-tech products and the marketing potentials thereof

The position will be senior key man of the principal shareholder and operates at a Senior Management Level with the possibility of becoming COO of all or some of the companies in the short and medium-term. The compensation package includes salary/allowances, bonuses, overriding commissions, 5% to 10% profit-sharing, plus industrial stock ownership in the companies in the group. Final stock ownership will be contingent on delivered sales performance. This is an ideal opportunity for ambitious, self-driven, self-motivated, and entrepreneurially-inclined people without the capital to go on his own. There will be no financial risk for you. The only capital will be one to two years of your skills, time and effort. This is an opportunity to find out how good you really are at entrepreneurship without any risk on your part. Interested parties may send your resumé with a photo to: **recruitment_hr_mails@yahoo.com** or **PO Box Makati 3766.**

WEB ENGINEER

P/T, Students ok
Websphere, OAS, Tomcat, Apache, EJB, JSP, Java, XML, Unix, Linux, Windows, Oracle, SQLServer, DB2

www.GeoCities.com/KoolJobs2004
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WANTED
Female College Graduate

- Age 28-30
- To Manage & Assist in Household Management
- Must be willing to live in Subic/Bataan Area
- Good English Speaking with very Pleasant Personality
- Able to Direct and Manage Household Staff in Everyday chores

Starting Salary : P10,000.00 depending on qualification and experience

Email your resumé at : **ericsan_2006@yahoo.com.ph** or text **09159669613**

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Account Managers

1. Completed 4 years of college education in the field of communication arts, journalism, marketing, management, or social sciences;
2. At least 1 year solid experience in project/account management work, marketing communications or research;
3. Competent in the use of various software packages;
4. Good writing and communication skills;
5. Able to work independently and willing to work long hours.

Media Relations Manager

1. Completed 4 years of college education in the field of communication arts, journalism, or marketing. Post Graduate degree highly desirable.
2. At least 5 years solid experience in media relations or publication work;
3. At least 3 years of supervisory experience;
4. Excellent writing and communication skills;
5. Extensive contacts with the various branches of media;
6. Competent in the use of various software packages;
7. Excellent interpersonal relations skills.

HR Officer

1. COMPLETED AT LEAST 4 YEARS OF COLLEGE EDUCATION, PREFERABLY IN THE AREAS OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, OR MANAGEMENT.
2. At least 2 years experience in human resources development/management;
3. At least 1 year supervisory experience;
4. Some experience in the exercise of administrative functions highly desirable;
5. Effective motivational and interpersonal skills;
6. Competent and proficient in the application of computer software packages;
7. Knowledge in operating basic office equipment.

Qualified applicants may send their comprehensive resume to the following address:
5/F Valderrama Bldg., 107 Esteban St., Legaspi Village, Makati City 1200
or email: **hrd@eon.com.ph**

For more information, please visit **www.eon.com.ph**. Interested applicants are invited to Apply Online. Only short-listed candidates will be notified.

Consultant Attorney

The American Bar Association's Asia Law Initiative (ABA-Asia) seeks a Consultant Attorney based in the Manila office to support the implementation of ABA-Asia's legal technical assistance program in the Philippines. ABA-Asia activities include support for judicial reforms, legal education reforms, bar exam reforms, support for continuing legal education activities, and other rule of law activities. Job responsibilities include, but are not limited to, coordination with local partners, ABA-Asia specialists, workshop participants, and other ABA-Asia staff and consultants. The Consultant Attorney will be required to travel regularly as part of the implementation responsibility. The Consultant Attorney will report on a regular basis to the ABA-Asia Resident Advisor in the Philippines.

Job requirements

- Law degree,
- Bar admission,
- Minimum of five years of work experience,
- Experience working in USAID-funded activities preferred,
- Excellent communication skills,
- Excellent writing ability,
- Good self-management and organizational skills,
- Computer skills including experience with Microsoft Word applications and e-mail.

Qualified candidates should submit a cover letter, resume, and two to three page writing sample to ABA-Asia, 1602-A East Tower, PSE Centre, Exchange Road, Ortigas Center, Pasig City, Philippines 1605 or via fax at (632) 631-2598, or email at fidesaba@pldtdsl.net. Applications must be received by June 21, 2006.

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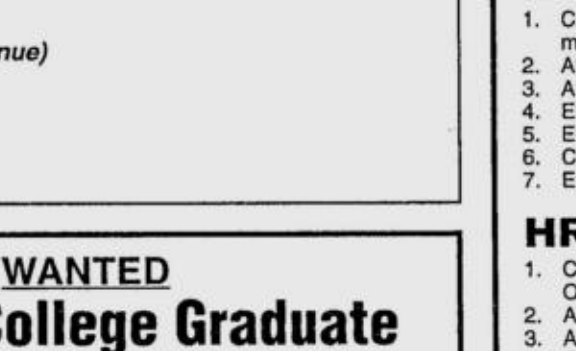

extensive knowledge and experience in print and environmental graphics production + knowledgeable in materials and supplies + tasks include final artwork preparation, sourcing and coordination of suppliers, and production supervision

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B+C DESIGN

A CULTURE OF HIGH PERFORMANCE.

That's the Vision of our Human Resources.
We are about to get there.
And we invite You, as HR Professional,
to help us consistently fulfill this Vision as

Assistant Manager for Human Resources

This position has rich opportunity for a higher HR management role. As such, the person we are seeking should have a successful track record as Strategic Partner for Operations – one who has exercised the full spectrum of HR functions to help the company maintain and win the business.

To be our Partner, you should be:

- A college graduate, preferably with a master's degree in behavioral sciences or human resources
- With at least 6 years experience in HR in a similar capacity and preferably gained in a unionized company.
- Experienced in Labor Relations, adept at proactive management of employee agreements and closure of employee issues, and with working knowledge of labor laws
- Very knowledgeable in Performance Management and its translation into merit-based employee compensation and benefits
- With exposure in OD, Training, Staffing, and management of contractor services in Security and Medical Benefits;
- Previously engaged with Global HR operations and processes
- Excellent in communication and interpersonal skills
- Tactful, with proven integrity, and with effective people skills

We are an American multinational electronics company, listed among Fortune's Top 1000, with global visibility in the past three decades. We offer a competitive compensation and benefit package for the position. Interested applicants may send their resume through email at odsearch06@yahoo.com on or before June 26, 2006. We will respond only to short- listed candidates.

Immediate Job Openings

- **Manager** with Marketing Background
- **Certified Public Accountant**

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Are you
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Aged 30 or over, preferably single,
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Willing to work until the job is properly done,
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Experienced in multilevel marketing

Please send us the following:
your biodata, 2"x2" recent photo taken within the last 15 days, samples of your previous work to:

808 G/F Island Plaza, Leviste St., Salcedo Village, Makati
Re: Marketing Officer Position
or email: gmcks_lls@yahoo.com

TOP DRAW OUTSOURCING is a technology-based Business Process Outsourcing company that provides accounting and general corporate services to various clients in Australia, Hong Kong, USA and UK. It is primarily organized with an intention of providing clients with the highest caliber of service, professionally delivered and based on the platforms of **QUALITY, RELIABILITY, SECURITY and VALUE.**

WE ARE LOOKING FOR:

ACCOUNTANTS

The successful applicant should be well presented and comfortable in dealing with foreign customers and management alike. Other pre-requisites include:

- Qualified CPA
- 2 years minimum experience in an audit and/or tax sections of a public accounting practice
- Excellent English skills (written and verbal)
- Knowledge and experience in using various accounting software applications
- A willingness to be trained

Exciting promotion and career path opportunities exist for the motivated, high achievers.

Please send your resumé to:

Ms. Tata Siacor
Suite 601, 6th Floor West Tower, Philippine Stock Exchange Centre
Exchange Road, Ortigas Center, Pasig City 1605
Tel. #: 687-7220 / Fax#. 687-5538
Or email it to : tatas@topdraw.com.ph
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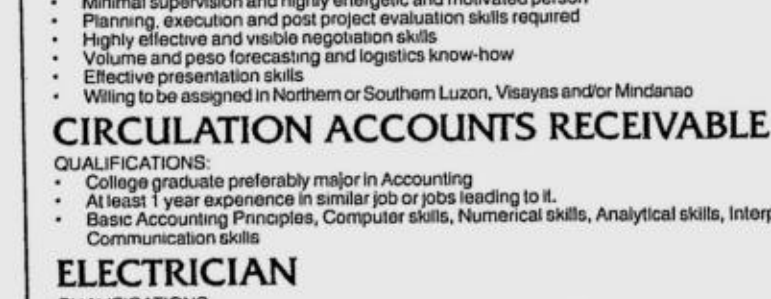

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The National HR Coordinator shall: (1) review, maintain and develop policies and procedures that will assist senior management in ensuring consistent interpretation, application and implementation of policies and procedures across the organization; (2) manage recruitment, placement and separation procedures including contract preparation for regular, temporary staff and consultants; (3) handle the HR section of the Quality Management Review; (4) Develop a Staff Development Plan and coordinate the conduct of trainings that are relevant and appropriate in a timely manner; (5) establish and maintain a computerized Human Resource Information System; (6) assist management in creating standard job descriptions and evaluation criteria while maintaining an effective implementation of job grade and salary structures appropriate to the competencies of employees; (7) administer and recommend to management salary and benefits rationalization to enable the agency to be competitive and retain deserving staff; (8) assist supervisors and staff in understanding and using the Performance Appraisal System; (9) ensure observance of and compliance with labor laws and government regulations and handling due process of employee termination for cause, complaints, grievances and disciplinary actions within the bounds of SC procedure and Philippine labor laws.

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Qualified applicants may send their resumes on or before June 26, 2006 to : *By mail* - CODE: NATIONAL HR COORDINATOR, Save the Children Federation, Inc., No.1 Encarnacion Street corner Lapu-Lapu Avenue, Magallanes Village, Makati City, Metro Manila. *By fax*: (632) 853-02-15. *By e-mail*: HR_Recruitment@savechildren.org (please indicate code "NATIONAL HR COORDINATOR" in subject line).

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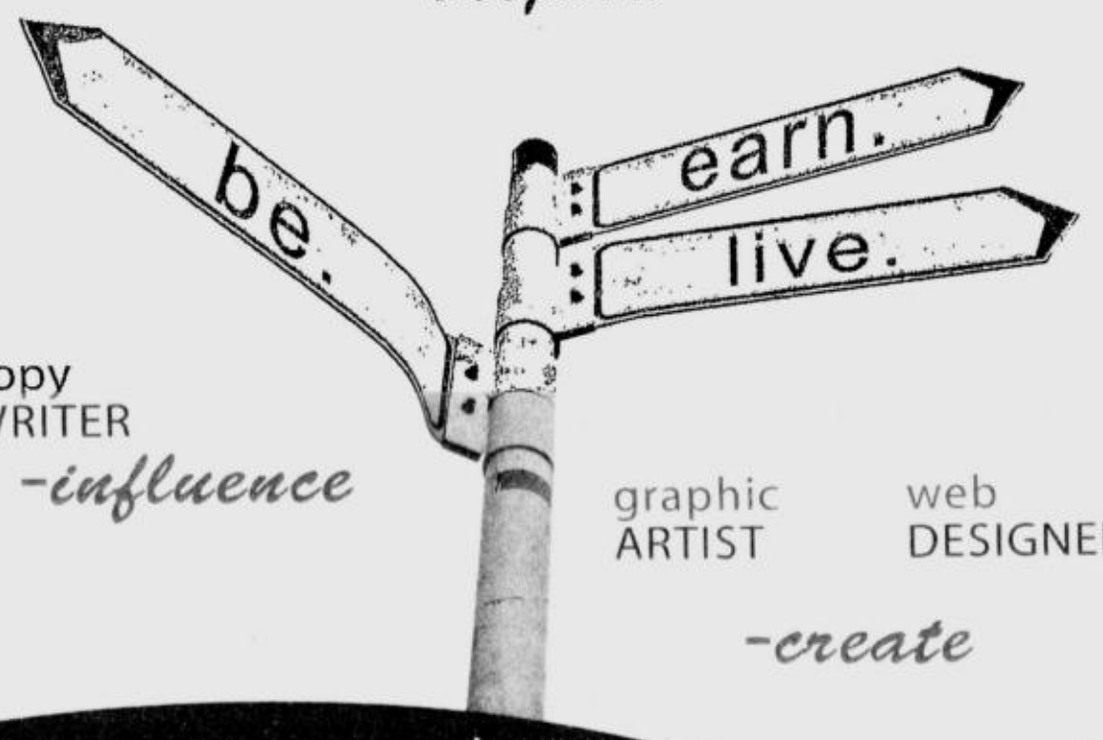

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American manager responds to Filipino manager's dilemma

By Tita Datu Puangco

Advice FOR THE ANXIOUS PERSON AT WORK

HERE'S A RESPONSE FROM an American manager to our letter sender who expressed her frustrations working as a new manager in the United States (*see my column dated Oct. 26, 2005*).

I just read your response to a person in the United States having issues with her Filipino manager. After reading your response, I must say that as an American manager in a large fortune 500 firm, your advice is solid and she should accept it. However, there are additional things to consider. They are as follows:

1. The woman obviously displays traits that indicate personal issues may be the underlying reason for her behavior. The writer indicated she worked for a large US firm. Most US firms have employee assistance programs designed to assist employees with personal issues. I would advise the employee to seek help through the program.

2. Your Filipino manager indicated she heard through coworkers that she may be having personal issues, which indicates the manager may be talking to others regarding this person's behavior—a big no-no with respect to human resources. Employees should respect of confidentiality and it is the job of a manager to turn performance around to meet the expectations of the company. The manager could find herself the target of litigation in the US for such behavior. It is certainly acceptable to discuss performance issues with your manager to determine what action should be taken, but never discuss a subordinate's behavior with coworkers.

3. The subordinate is creating a hostile work environment. If she speaks to her manager with such defiance, I am sure she equally disrespects her coworkers with similar intimidation tactics. Again, working for a large US company, there is a disciplinary process in place and the manager should learn the policy and start to correct the behavior based on the process the company has established.

4. Sometimes, the process is a) documented oral notification of the problem and what must be done to correct the problem. b) written notification if the problem persists c) performance improvement plan if the problem continues, very specific improvement actions must be performed within a specified period; if no improvement, the employee can be terminated. Everything is documented through this process.

5. Your manager indicates she is a sweet person. The description she has of herself leads me to believe that she seeks to be accepted by her employees. She may be slow to counsel employees and give feedback regarding poor performance because it would lead others to believe she is not sweet. This manager probably was a good worker and was promoted to the manager on that basis. I would advise her to enroll herself in performance management training to stay ahead of employee performance concerns and address the performance concerns from a human resources perspective. Employees in the US (and most any place else in the world) respond to good leadership and structure.

6. Sometimes, Americans don't respond well to reporting to foreigners ... especially women with foreign dialects until the leadership traits are proven.

7. I thought your advice to her was good, especially not to quit her job or leave based on the behavior of one employee. No matter where you go, you are there. If she understands the limitations she has as a manager, she can seek additional training and development to improve on her skills and over time, the art and science of leading performance actually makes it easier to decide the situation you face and which tools to use to make it better.

Percy E. Price, PMP, USA

Thanks for providing additional advice and information to our Frustrated Manager who is a new manager in the United States. Often, solutions to problems can be found in specific situations and best practices given a particular environment and milieu. God bless!

(Ms Puangco is CEO of Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting, a training and consulting company specializing in strategy management, leading change, human resource systems, leadership and enterprise training. For your letters/ feedback, e-mail: advice@ancillaedc.com.ph, or fax: 892-2902. For other inquiries, please call 892-2895, 892-2896 or 892-2898.)

How to make your presentations click

By Heizel L. Mainar

MARTIN Sumayao (L) and Robert Blair Carabuena (R) from ZMG Signium Ward Howell — ROY THOMAS ALBERTO

BUTTERFLIES IN THE STOMach, sweaty palms and panic attacks are just some of the thoughts that come to mind for most when they hear the words "business presentation." You might be one of those who fear that others might judge you when you make those grammar slips or that you might freeze in the middle of a presentation. However, before you start acting weird, sit down, organize your thoughts, list all the things you need and start preparing for that big day. If you have a plan and have prepared properly for the big day, a presentation might not be nightmarish as you think.

Prepare a checklist

If you start the research from scratch, it should be prepared weeks in advance," says Martin Sumayao, an associate of ZMG Signium Ward Howell, an executive search consultancy firm in the Philippines.

Take time to prepare an effective visual aid. "The use of pictures and graphs increase message retention instead of bullet points ... avoid the use of PowerPoint sound effects even though how compelling it is to use the applause sound at the end of the slide or a screeching sound for a new picture or graph," says Albert Danan, public relations officer of San Sebastian College in Manila.

Robert Blair Carabuena, another associate of Ward Howell, adds that a visual presentation only supplements the major points of the whole presentation.

When you focus on the explanation, you establish rapport and encourage audience participation rather than giving them all the information through visual aids or hand outs.

The venue is another important factor to check. "Make sure the room has everything that you need and that the presentation works on the screen to avoid nasty surprises on the big day," says Carabuena. Check the color of the stage to make sure you do not blend with the background.

Finally, be keen on your attire. Consider what you want to project to your audience. "Look at the whole picture and check every element of your appearance from head to feet and make sure that you are comfortable and confident in what you wear," says Sumayao.

Practice

According to Danan, rehearsing your speech is an absolute must. Memorizing the speech word for word works for some people, however, for some, getting the gist of a presentation in an index card is all they need.

"Read your presentation out loud for at least four times," he says. When you hear yourself, determine the weight and tone of your voice if it creates an impact to your audience. If possible, deliver a mock presentation and ask your friends to listen and give feedback. "You need at least two days before the presentation to familiarize yourself with the topic," adds Sumayao.

During a presentation

"Take a deep breath, don' fidget and calm down," says Sumayao. He explains that keeping eye contact with the audience makes you look sincere, and it will keep the audience's attention. However, you need to spread your attention around the room and not just focus on a particular group of people.

Avoid the use of jargons in your speech, unless you are confident that your audience speaks the same business language. He adds that long presentations can turn off the audience and can be boring.Remember the KISS rule—Keep It Straight and Simple.

"The quality of your voice also determines how to get your message across." Your voice quality helps build an overall impact and you need to determine what word to stress and when. Also, one must learn how to throw an adlib in case you missed a point or two. Others who are used to standing in front of a crowd may make use of a scripted adlib to add texture to a canned presentation.

According to Teresa Tubania, a psychometrician of the Student Development Center office of SSC, maintaining good posture creates a look of confidence.

When preparing your speech, the choice of words you use in the presentation creates an impression, which affects the overall presentation. Tubania explains that the first sentence you utter is important thus, it may or may not capture your audience's attention. She ends aptly by saying, "if you fail to prepare your presentation, then you prepare to fail."

"Without emotional intelligence a person can have the best training in the world an incisive analytical mind and an endless supply of smart ideas but he still won't make a great leader"
-- Harvard Business Review

Porter & Miles
Your Partner For Greater Productivity

EQ for Today's *Supervisors*

EQ is the sine qua non of leadership

June 30, 2006.1:00pm-5:00pm, Holiday Inn Galleria

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Seasoned HR professionals and astute business owners know of leaders or employees who are highly intelligent and technically skilled but fail because of their lack of "emotional intelligence" EQ is a major predictor of one's success, especially for supervisors and leaders. That is why, if you believe it is worth investing in the development of skills of your leaders, the more that you should invest in the enhancement of their emotional intelligence

LEARNING SEED

- EQ and Personal & Professional Success
- IQ versus EQ
- Characteristics of Highly Effective Leaders
- Components of Emotional Intelligence
- EQ and Effective Communication
- EQ and Conflict Resolution
- Developing Your EQ
- Applying Emotional Intelligence in Organizations

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Accounting for Non- Accountants

Porter & Miles
Your Partner For Greater Productivity

June 15 & 16, 2006, 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m., Holiday Inn Galleria

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

This is especially designed for non-accounting managers, supervisors and personnel. Whether you like it or not, you have to work with some issues in basic accountind.Empower yourself and your people! BEcome acquainted with fundamental accounting subjects and you will come up with better business decisions.

LEARNING SEED

Day 1
I. Introduction
- Types of business organizations
- Definition of accounting
- Purpose of accounting
- Users of accounting information
- Introduction to the most commonly -used generally accepted accounting principles

II. Overview of the accounting cycle
- Nature of business transactions
- The accounting equation
- Introduction of the most common account titles
- Differentiation of accounts in a servicing and merchandising bussiness
- Recordable business transactions

III. Understanding the balance sheet and income statement
- The balance and its accounts
- The income statements and its accounts
- Preparation of the balance sheet and income statement

Day 2
IV. The statement of cash flow
- Business activities analyzed - Operating, investing and financing activities
- Preparation of the statement of cash flow
- Relevance of the statement of cash flow in business

V. Tools for financial statement analaysis
- What is financial analysis
- Comparative finacial statements
- Common-size statements
- Financial ratios as measures of - liquidity and solvency, profitability, stability
- Related exercises

VI. Cost-Volume-Profit Analysis
- Cost-Volume-Profit Analysis and the cost concepts
- Breakevon analysis as a tool in profit planning

a) sales at breakevon and at desired profit levels
b) sales mix between and at desired profit levels

To elaborate and apply these concepts, actual and practical accounting exercises and problems will be used

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Accounting for non-accountants seminar set

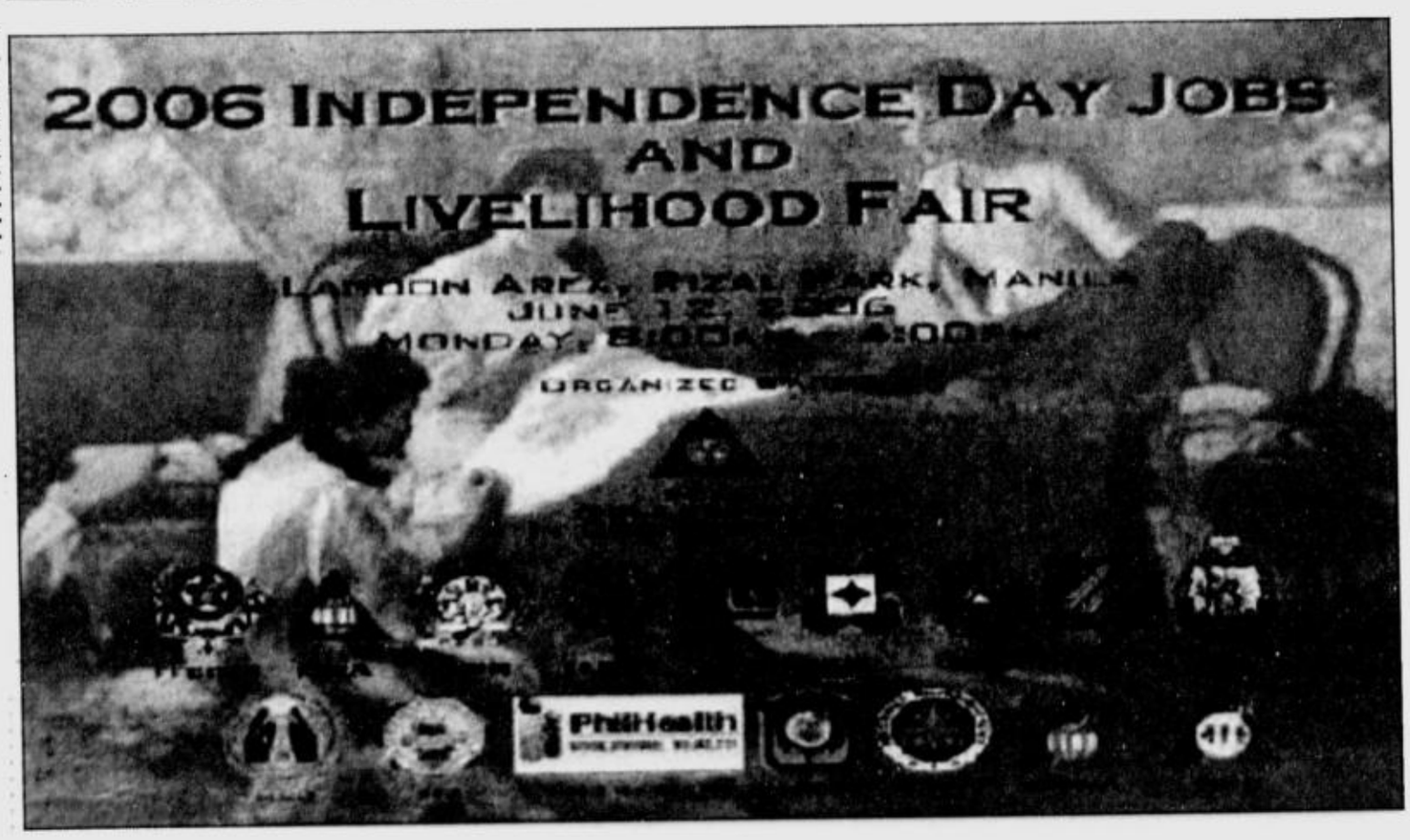
A SPECIAL WORKshop will be held on June 15 and 16, 1–5 pm at Holiday Inn Galleria to boost your knowledge on accounting.

This is especially designed for non-accounting managers, supervisors and personnel. Whether you like it or not, you have to work with some issues in basic accounting.

Topics include: The accounting cycle; Adjusting journal entries; Financial Statements like Balance Sheet and Income Statements; The Cash Flow Statement and Financial Statements.

The seminar is sponsored by Porter and Miles Inc., with office address at Suite 2502-C Tektite Tower East, Ortigas Center.

Call Mercy at 638-7719 / 20 for more information / reservation. Limited seats only.



Independence Day jobs fair to highlight legal, welfare services for local, overseas workers

THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT (DOLE) WILL BRING ITS legal and welfare assistance onsite to local as well as overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) during the 2006 Independence Day Jobs and Livelihood Fair at Rizal Park in Manila on June 12, 2006.

Acting Labor Secretary Danilo P. Cruz said that the onsite legal and welfare assistance complements the government's effort to provide more than 30,000 employment opportunities courtesy of some 135 local employers and 34 licensed overseas employment agencies during the fair.

Labor Undersecretary for Labor Relations Manuel G. Imson, on the other hand, said that appropriate services will also be set up on site to assist the welfare queries and needs of OFWs and would-be OFWs.

"Indeed, the provision of such services, in consonance with the country's labor-management harmony and peace, gives added significance to our celebration of the 108th Anniversary of the country's Independence with the theme, Pagkakaisa Para sa Matatag na Republika," Imson said.

He said that a total of eight DOLE offices, agencies, and pertinent organizations are participating in the provision of onsite legal services through special booths designated for the purpose at the Luneta Park.

They are the DOLE's National Capital Region Office (DOLE-NCR), as well as the NCR branches of the National Conciliation and Mediation Board, the National Labor Relations Commission, the Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Board (RTWPB)-NCR, and the Regional Tripartite Industrial Peace Council (RTIPC-NCR).

Also on hand to assist the welfare-related and other pertinent needs of workers, specially OFWs, are the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA)-NCR, as well as the DOLE's Maritime Training Council (MTC), and the National Maritime Polytechnic (NMP).

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This seminar is sponsored by Porter and Miles Inc., with office address at Suite 2502-C Tektite Tower East, Ortigas Center.

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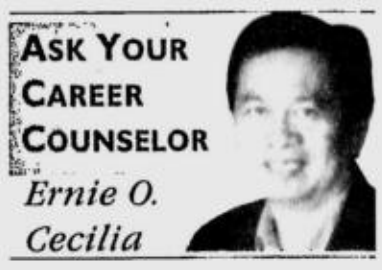
'How can I make my job easier?'

I HAVE BEEN WORKING IN A small company for more than three years now. Because we are a small company, I usually end up doing so many things for my boss. Frankly, most of the things I do are no longer in my original job description as marketing assistant.

My worry is that I have not specialized in or mastered any particular area of the marketing function. My boss keeps giving me additional work even before I have mastered doing my earlier assignments. I want to progress in my career and apply with a large company, but I am afraid that I can't say where my competence lies.

I wish that I could simplify my job and focus on it. That way, I can make my job easier and I can specialize in a particular area at a time. Can you give me some tips on how I can do this?

Jack of All Trades



As I usually say, "You are in good company!" Hundreds of thousands of employees experience the same predicament. Jobs are so dynamic that if you don't update your job description in six months, there's a chance that it will become obsolete. But updating your job description is not the essence of your concern.

Accept reality

It would be ideal if what you do at work is exactly what you read in your job description. In reality, as you do your job, you will be asked to do related things that you or your boss did not contemplate before as part of your job. As you show greater capability to take on other jobs, you will likely receive additional assignments that will stretch your abilities. This could complicate matters for you.

First thing you should do is accept the reality that jobs change due to changing customer needs and changing environment. At the least, you should understand why these things happen. At best, you must learn to accept this as a way of life in the new workplace.

Don't make your job too easy

I am almost tempted to give tips on how to make your job easier, but I had second thoughts.

If you want to keep your job, don't make your job look easier than it is. Job evaluation systems tend to give bigger points to more complicated jobs. Highly routine and easy jobs usually get paid peanuts or end up being outsourced to contractors or subcontractors.

If you want to have a great career, look for ways to make your job more complicated or difficult. If your job now is too easy, ask your boss what else he can add to your job. Better yet, ask which parts of his job he can delegate to you. This is a great formula for making your job more difficult, challenging and high-paying. There is a long-term benefit in doing this. As you keep doing part of your boss' job, you are helping him narrow down his choice of successors, and you are getting the inside track.

Generalist or specialist

You can always enhance your career, whether you are a generalist or a specialist. Sometimes, it is better to know well enough about everything (generalist) than to know everything about one area alone (specialist.) Try to be both if you can. Doesn't it sound nice that, because you know a little of everything, you can run your department whenever your boss is not around?

Try to increase the depth of your knowledge in as many areas as you can. Learn as much as you can about every job that your boss entrusts to you, even if it is not your main responsibility.

Career shift

Don't worry too much that you don't have a specialization when you apply with large companies. Most employers today hire for attitude and fit with the organization. They train for skills. When I got hired by San Miguel for a human resource position, I had no HR experience at all. Later in my career, I held top HR posts in other large companies.

Just do a great job every time, make a good track record, show willingness and ability to learn fast, never burn your bridges, and career moves even to other companies can be easy for you. Make every job a learning experience for you.

Do more, learn more

Whenever you stretch the breadth and depth of your area of responsibility, you tend to achieve more. You also learn more.

Bosses have the knack of giving additional assignments to people they can trust to do the job well. When your boss gives you more work outside of your usual job, take it as a learning opportunity. Learn as much as you can, interact more with your boss, get more directions, anticipate his future needs, and surprise him always with a great performance whenever he assigns something new to you.

Truly, you will end up doing more and reaping more rewards if you consistently do what needs to be done, not just what you are told to do, regardless whose job it is!

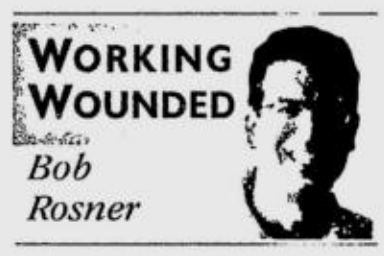
(Public service announcement: There will be a grand reunion of all alumni of the University of Nueva Caceres, Naga City in September this year. Alumni in Metro Manila can e-mail me their contact details so that the Organizing Committee can contact them.)

(Mr. Cecilia is the president and CEO of EC Business Solutions and Career Center, a human resource consulting firm. E-mail feedback to ernie_cecilia@yahoo.com.)

How do you remember someone's name at work?

DEAR WW: THIS SOUNDS REally stupid. But I'm in sales and no matter what I do I just can't remember people's names. I think it's starting to hurt me. Help, whatever your name is.

Nameless



Your e-mail reminded me of the plight of a recent valedictorian at Alcee Fortier Senior High School in New Orleans. Ironically, the student with the highest grade point average in the school just can't graduate. It turns out that she failed, for the fifth time, the state's mandatory exit exam and college is in limbo until she passes the test.

And just like that valedictorian, our relationship with a client can receive top grades and we can still lose the sale because of one failed test. And it can be over something as small as forgetting someone's name. I've included strategies to keep the most important names right on the tip of your tongue. For more, check out Diane Darling's book, "Networking Survival Guide" (McGraw Hill, 2003).

Do you care about remembering their name? You've passed this test by writing to me to ask for strategies for remembering someone's name. But I fear that you are the exception and not the rule. I've met many people who just don't care if they get a person's name correct. If you don't think someone's name is important, remember the last time someone who you did a lot of business with forgot yours.

Do you repeat it? This is an easy to overlook, but important step. Say their name right after they tell you what it is. Be sure to give them a chance to correct your pronunciation. I know that many people believe that they can just repeat it in their heads for the same result, but there is something to actually saying a name out loud.

Can you use it in conversation? Have you ever had a conversation with someone you just met who repeats your name in every sentence? I hate it. Then again, repetition can really help so it's a good idea to repeat their name judiciously throughout your conversation.

Can you connect the name to something? You might see a guy named Dan and think of a big fan. Or Sue and think about her blue eyes. Okay, these both seem simple and that is the point. You want to find a little trick, association or reference that will be both simple and memorable. Don't expect this to leap immediately to mind, you might have to talk to them for a bit to come up with something that you can link to their name.

Do you write it down? Some people don't really remember something until they write it down. I always try to ask someone for a business card and then jot down something about them to help me remember our conversation.

With so many things on all of our to-do lists it's a wonder that we even remember our own name. Use these tips and you'll get top grades from your clients.

Here are the results from a recent workingwounded.com/ABCnews.com online ballot: How would you rate your ability to remember people's names?

—Top notch, 8.3 percent

—Average, 45.1 percent

—What was the question? 46.5 percent

(Mr. Rosner, an internationally syndicated columnist, author and speaker, is based in Seattle, Washington, USA. E-mail him at bob@workingwounded.com.)

DOLE offers Independence Day jobs and livelihood fair for workers

THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR and Employment (DOLE) will bring its legal and welfare assistance onsite to local as well as overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) during the 2006 Independence Day Jobs and Livelihood Fair at Rizal Park in Manila on June 12.

Acting Labor Secretary Danilo P. Cruz said that the onsite legal and welfare assistance complements the government's effort to provide more than 30,000 employment opportunities courtesy of some 135 local employers and 34 licensed overseas employment agencies during the fair.

"Through such services, we hope to be able to assist and successfully resolve the labor-related problems of our clients including labor and management," he said.

Labor Undersecretary for labor relations Manuel G. Imson, on the other hand, said that appropriate services will also be set up on site to assist the welfare queries and needs of OFWs and would-be OFWs.

"Indeed, the provision of such services, in consonance with the country's labor-management harmony and peace, gives added significance to our celebration of the 108th Anniversary of the country's Independence with the theme, Pagkakaisa Para sa Matatag na Republika," Imson said.

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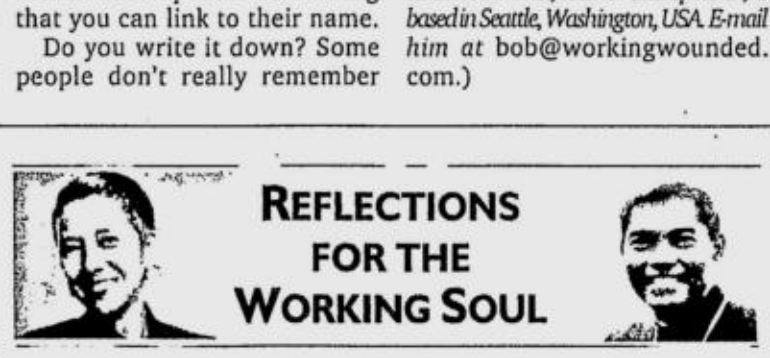
Also on hand to assist the welfare-related and other pertinent needs of workers, specially OFWs, are the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (Owwa)-NCR, as well as the DOLE's Maritime Training Council (MTC), and the National Maritime Polytechnic (NMP).

Source: www.dole.gov.ph

A working grandmother

By Teresa R. Tunay, OCDS



WHEN I WAS VERY SMALL AND DID NOT YET UNDERSTAND things about God, my grandmother told me, "*Si Hesus, palagi nating kasama iyan. Isipin mo lang Siya at nandiyan na Siya, puwede mo Siyang kausapin.*" (Jesus is always there for us. Just think of Him and He's there, you may converse with Him.) I believed her, maybe because she was a very kind woman and her talk would almost always refer to "*ang sabi ng Panginoon*" (what the Lord says). Young and impressionable as I was, I imagined she was always in conversation with Jesus because she was always reading the Bible and would even tell us children when she'd dream of Jesus.

Only much later, in adulthood, did I realize how long-lasting and powerful that childhood impression could be. When I'm in really trying situations at work—particularly when feeling misunderstood by superiors or very competitive peers (and you know how ferocious some media people can be)—my grandmother's words about the presence of Jesus would come to mind and I would "automatically," almost unconsciously engage in a mental conversation with Him! I would remember "*ang sabi ng Panginoon:*" Love your enemies. Do good to those who hate you. Turn the other cheek. Learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart. Then I would be at peace doing my work as usual, thinking, "This, too, shall pass."

My grandmother was not a "working woman" but she was always working. Raising 15 children (unthinkable for me!) she would still find time to feed and bathe the pigs and recycle paper and read the Bible. Reading today's Gospel reminded me of her—I realize she was/is a true "disciple" of Jesus, the first to have been sent into my life. (*E-mail the author at* teresa_de_manila@yahoo.com)

Gospel: Mt. 28:16-20

Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit . . . And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age."

Divine help in business

By Bishop Precioso D. Cantillas, SDB, DD

WHEN I RECEIVED MY FIRST ASSIGNMENT AS A NEW priest, my Superior just casually told me to go to our Seminary-College and be the Dean of Studies. Unlike Jesus in today's Gospel who gave specific instructions to His disciples, and assurance of His abiding presence among them, my Superior gave me no papers and other documents which would guide me in my task; and no promise of a supportive presence was given me either. But I did go to my assigned work, armed more with a strong faith—that it is God, who, through my superiors, has given me the mission and that He will not fail to help me accomplish what He wanted me to do—than with my academic preparation and training. Somehow, I was able to fulfill satisfactorily the requirements of my job.

Managers and executives in a highly competitive business and workplace, however, would make sure that workers are selected from among those with high academic or technical preparation and training, and given precise job instructions and formation. Their professional sense would require the workers to perform with high standard and efficiency. Their business orientation would drive the employees to maximum productivity and profit. They would provide job security and fringe benefits which will assure the workers to stay at work for life. In short, they would seem to rely more on human capacity than on some "divine help" promised by Jesus, in the affairs of business and work.

Work and business would be much more rewarding and fulfilling if at the foundation of our human standards we believe in Jesus and in the "indwelling presence" of the Blessed Trinity within us. (*E-mail the author at* mfvg@skyinet.net)

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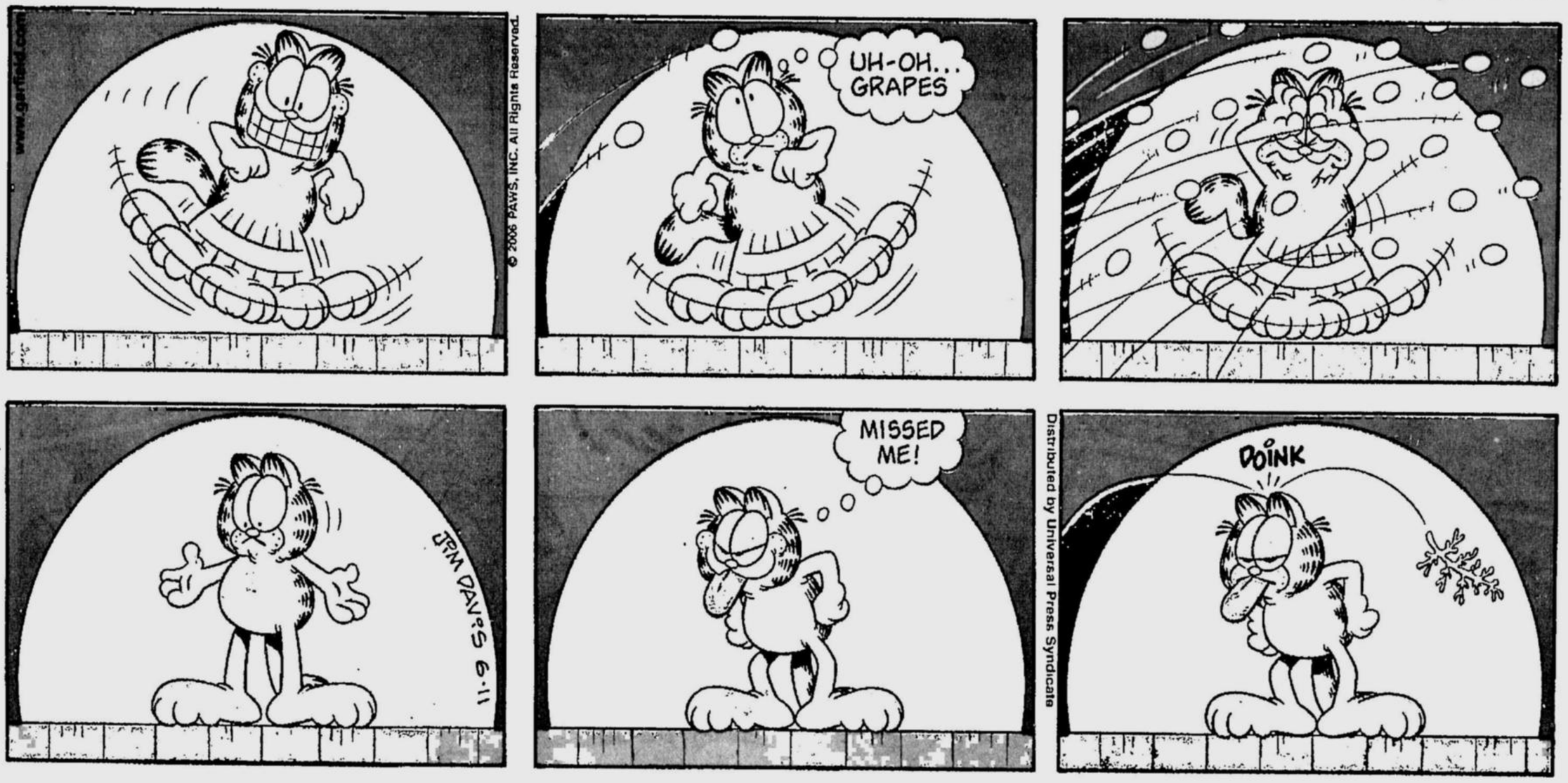
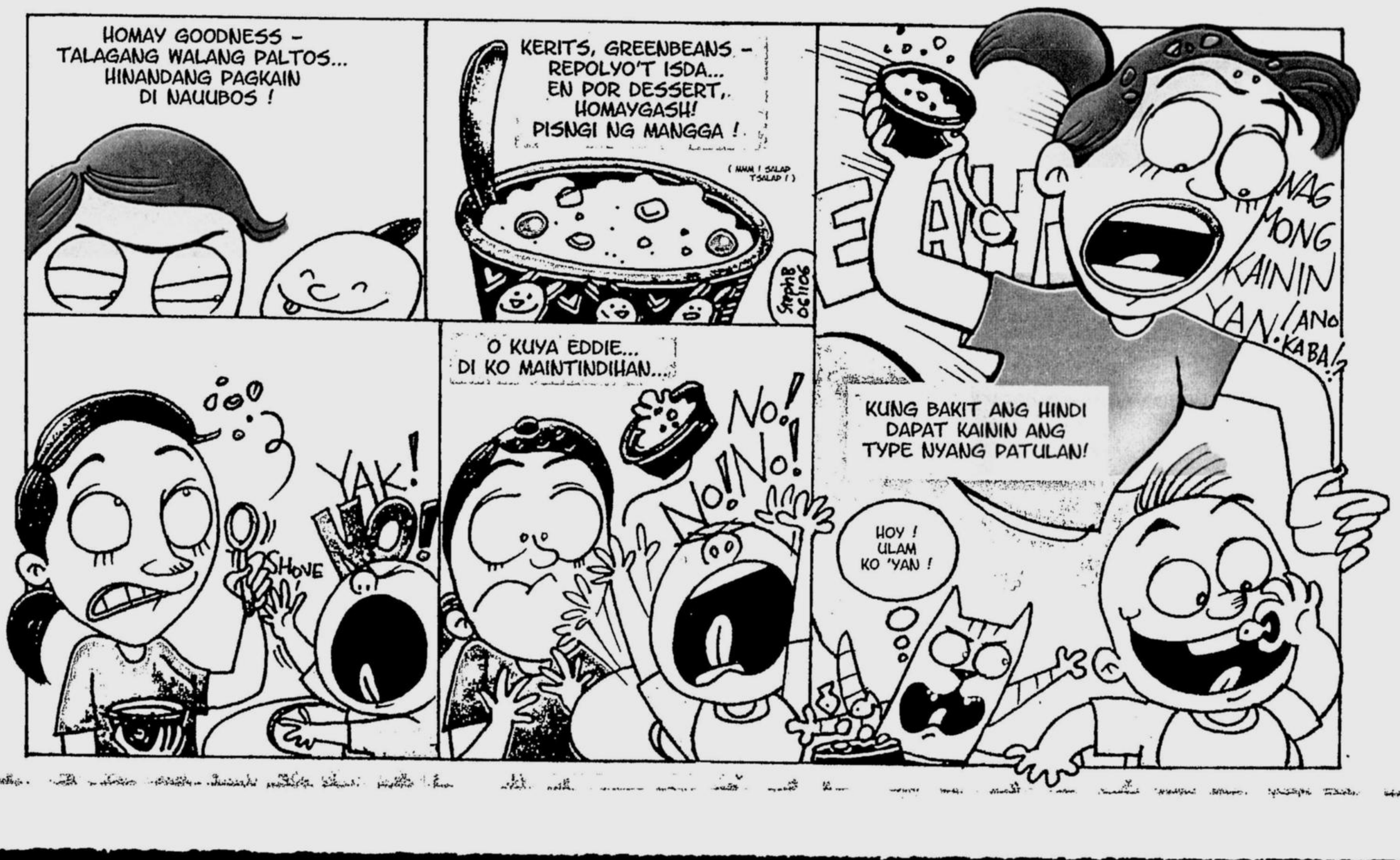


FULL HOUSE

BY STEPH BRAVO



June 11, 2006
sunday INQUIRER magazine
GET TO KNOW SOME REAL PEOPLE

The former Playboy model bares her passion for a new love—teaching psychology

From nude model to model teacher, TETCHIE AGBAYANI feels absolutely fabulous

By Eric S. Caruncho
photographs by Ernie U. Sarmiento

BY NOW, soap opera addicts tuning in to GMA's new-ish series "I Luv NY" have probably been introduced to Jolina Magdangal's neurotic mother, and guess what? It's none other than Tetchie Agbayani, back after a long absence from the limelight.

"I play the depressed, ex-beauty queen mother, Jolina's sole parent," says the actress.

"She's seen her glory days pass, she's now poor, and has a lot of angst. She had this dream of marrying a foreigner which didn't happen, so she's hoping that her daughter will fulfill some of her dreams."

To page 2

Tetchie Agbayani's antique Tibetan jewelry by Namaste Arts and Objects, Baguio City

To rally for animals *p.4*
To cover Everest *p.5*
To overcome the tide *p.6*

Tetchie ...from page 1

The character couldn't be further from Agbayani's real life. Not only does Tetchie still look fabulous at 44 and eminently well-adjusted, but she's found fulfillment in her family life, and a new love: teaching. If you ask her about her life these days, it seems her glory days are just beginning.

Believe it or not, the former beauty queen and model, who won nationwide notoriety in 1981 when she became the first Filipina to pose nude for Playboy magazine, is now teaching psychology to junior and senior psychology majors at St. Joseph's College in Quezon City, her alma mater. Not only that, but this semester, she hopes to finish her thesis, the final hurdle in earning her Master's degree in Counseling Psychology from the Ateneo de Manila University. After that, who knows? At this point, Dr. Tetchie isn't too much of a reach.

Is this one of those mid-life career shifts we've been hearing about?

"I suppose so," says Tetchie. "I think when you hit that stage you make a huge transition in your life. But it wasn't a spur-of-the-moment decision. It was something I've always contemplated doing—pursuing an education. When I dropped out of architecture in 1978, I did it with a heavy heart, but I had no choice at that time."

An independent streak

Born Visitacion Parado in Abra in 1961, Tetchie grew up in Manila, one of a brood of 14 brothers and sisters. Her parents and eventually all of her siblings migrated to the US, but while in Manila, Tetchie attended the University of Santo Tomas grade school and high school.

Even then, she already had an independent streak.

"I declared independence from my parents at age 16," she says. While still in high school, she joined the Mutya ng Pilipinas beauty pageant, where she became a runner up. Her dark-skinned good looks soon caught the eye of fashion designers, and in no time she was doing ramp work and print ads as a model.

"The first money I made as a model I spent on my college tuition fee at UST," she says. "I felt cool, but as I progressed I realized that architecture was a very demanding course. I would walk around the campus with my best friend then and draw the statues. But it took a lot of time, and I had to work. I took a job as one of the in-house models at the Philippine Village Hotel. At that time it was the 'in' thing to have a luncheon fashion show. I found it difficult to go back and forth from school to work and back to school, so I decided to forego school and work full-time."

Modeling soon led to television work, then to the movies, and later, the theater. Before Tetchie knew it, she was one of the busiest model/actresses in town.

"There was never an opportunity to go back to school, but it was always at the back of my mind," she says.

When she embarked on a showbiz career in earnest, she had been going by her real nickname "Tette," but to distinguish her from another actress who was already using the name "Tet," producer Jesse Ejercito named her "Tetchie." The name stuck, and only months later, it would become a household word.

When she turned 21, Tetchie was asked to pose for a spread by the German edition of Playboy magazine, and she promptly said "yes."

"When I did 'Playboy' my intention was to project myself as a model showing curves, the curves of a woman's body," she recalls. "It was not so much exposing the breasts or the private parts—it was more the nice flow."

Shot on a pristine beach in Siargao, the spread portrayed Tetchie as a sort of Pacific island siren: when she was clothed it was in a sarong and lei; more often she was clad only in her natural beauty. The photographer made the most of Tetchie's seamless tan and lustrous black hair. Although it wasn't the issue's centerfold, the spread caused a sensation, at least in the model's home country.

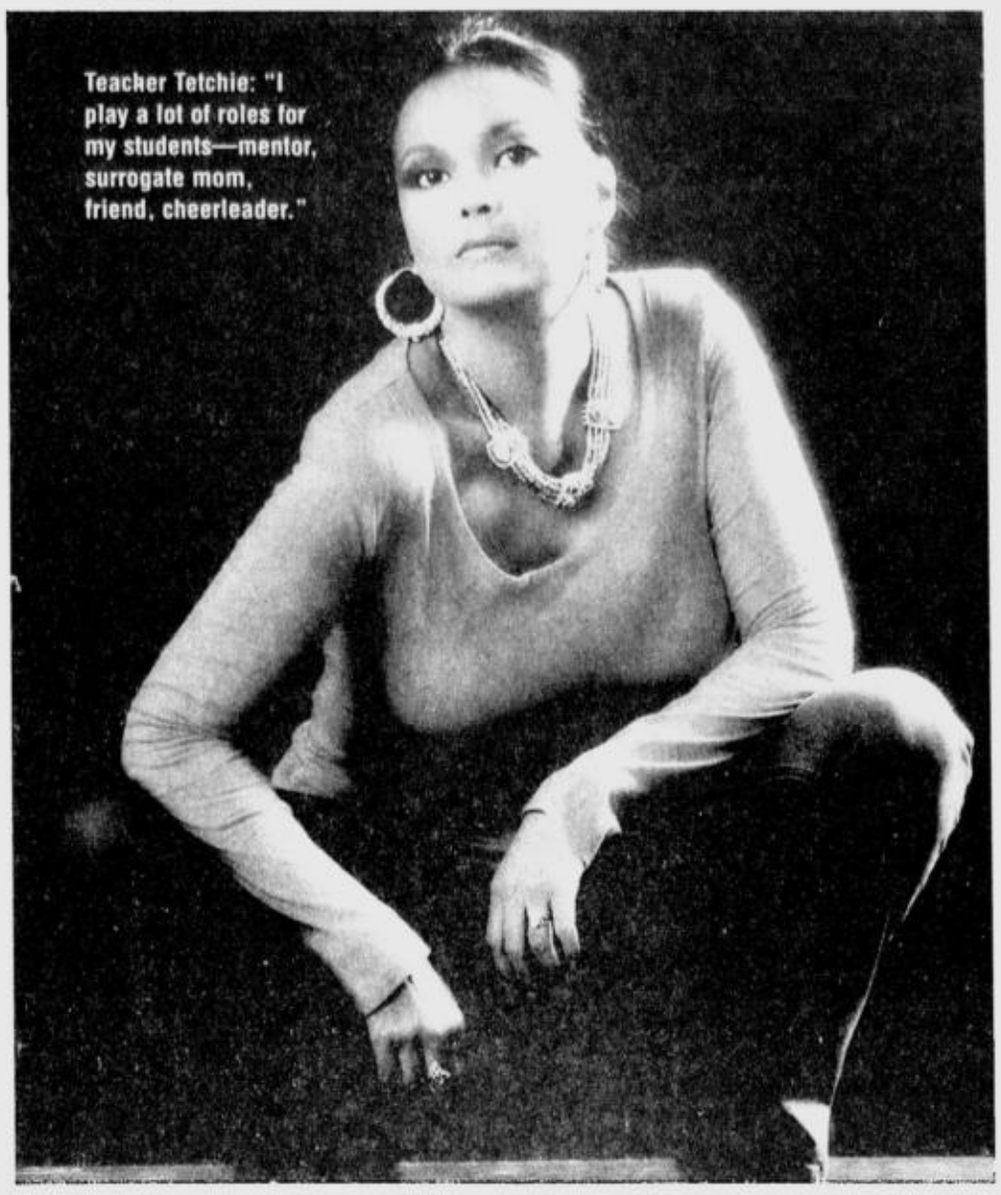
In 1981, it wasn't as easy to get Playboy as it is now: technically, it was still banned under martial law, and people had to go all the way to the PX stores in Dau, Pampanga to get copies. And this was the German edition. Somehow, copies began circulating, in some cases changing hands for anywhere from P700 to 1,200—quite a bit of money in 1981.

"All of a sudden I became a household name," recalls Tetchie. "Everybody knew me. People were making money out of me, selling T-shirts, mugs, cigarette cases with my pictures on them."

Tetchie mania

Soon the country was in the full grip of Tetchie mania. Outraged, the self-styled "guardians of public decency," led by their spokesperson at the time, Polly Cayetano, filed a lawsuit against Tetchie, charging her with obscenity. The case caused a media sensation. The Siguion-Reyna law office (at the time one of the most influential law firms in the country) dispatched one of their legal eagles to represent her pro bono as voices pro or con Tetchie's nude photos were raised in all media.

"I was drawn into a surreal world," recalls Tetchie. "It had a positive effect on my career, but it had a negative effect on me. It was an emotional burden. During the time, different quarters were giving their say about the whole issue: the Catholic church, the feminists were all talking about me. I didn't want to go out of my room because I didn't want to cause a commotion. I had a lot of invitations to go on shows, and if I were publicity hungry I would have gone to all of them, but I didn't. I just chose to be some sort of recluse, I suppose. I didn't want to fan the fire. But all these comments about me, I just absorbed them and asked, '*Ganoon ba ako*? Is that who I am? Is that what I'm all about?' I was clear about what I did. It was a job. I am a model and models use their bodies to express their art, their work, their craft. I think it was a big deal that finally, after seeing so many women grace the cover of Playboy, a Filipina was deemed worthy to pose for it, and it just so happened that that person was me. To me it was just a job, I didn't understand what the fuss was all about."



Teacher Tetchie: "I play a lot of roles for my students—mentor, surrogate mom, friend, cheerleader."

In 1983, the case was finally dropped. By that time, Tetchie had also posed for another nude spread in the Dutch edition of Playboy, but it drew much less attention. Much later, Tetchie would meet her erstwhile critic Polly Cayetano at a television program.

Hot property

"Our paths crossed, and we talked," she reports. " She was a nice lady when I met her, I believe she liked me too when she met me, so there."

Strangely enough, Tetchie doesn't even have a copy of the famous issue of Playboy.

"I downloaded a few pictures from the Internet, for posterity," she says.

In 1981, however, the Playboy controversy had the more immediate effect of making Tetchie hot property.

"Producers like to box you in, and the roles that came my way were all in the mold of the sexy young thing," she says. "I understood that I had a showbiz persona, but that was just a persona. Apart from that persona there was the real self in me, the self that was young, inquisitive and is willing to search for adventure, a self that wants to define her own values, her own principles, the self that asks what is right and wrong, what is inspired or painful in my life, existential questions like that. I was living in two worlds, the surreal and the real, and I found myself spending more time in the surreal world, being my showbiz persona. I was not so happy because I was neglecting my real world and my real self that also yearns and needs growing and attention. If you stay in the surreal world long enough and are so taken with the showbiz persona, you can lose yourself. And I didn't want to be devoured by the system."

At the height of her fame, exactly two days before Ninoy Aquino came home and was shot on the airport tarmac, Tetchie left the country to join her family in California.

"It was my intention to go back to school," she says. "I was one of those *baduy* Pinoys who bought those cheap eyeglasses with no grade, to look studious and nerdy and bright. I wanted to go to UCLA or Loyola Marymount. Boy, was that a dream! I was rudely awakened by the realization that it would cost an arm and a leg to go to the schools that I wanted. It was like $60,000 per semester, and I certainly couldn't afford that."

Homesick in Hollywood

Instead, Tetchie found herself signing up with the William Morris talent agency and auditioning for movie roles. After all, she was within spitting distance of Hollywood.

With pride and joy, daughter China

All in all, Tetchie made seven films while she was in the US. The most memorable are John Boorman's "The Emerald Forest," which brought her to the Amazon rainforest in Brazil, and Richard Benjamin's "The Money Pit," which starred Tom Hanks. But these small parts were not enough to make her go completely Hollywood. In 1987, homesick for the Philippines, she decided to pack it in and head for home.

"I was one month shy of swearing in and getting my American citizenship," she says. "But when the time came when I had to choose, I just could not. I'm Pinoy. I will always be Pinoy. I could not swear allegiance to another flag. So all my siblings are Americans, I'm the only Pinoy in the family. And I do not regret that."

Tetchie settled in Boracay, where she had bought a piece of land earlier, keeping her Manila apartment for the times when she had to work. "What does that tell you? I like my private life. I guard it fiercely," she says.

She soon got back in the groove of local showbiz, landing the prominent role of Sisa in Eddie Romero's TV serialization of "Noli Me Tangere" and doing stage plays for PETA and the Cultural Center of the Philippines. For the next two years, she shuttled back and forth, until Boracay got to be too crowded and commercialized, and lost some of its charm for her.

Tetchie underwent another rite of passage when she became a mother, giving birth to daughter China.

"When she turned two, I stopped acting totally and became a full-time mom," she says. "When she started to attend kindergarten, I was the one who suffered separation anxiety. I halted my career, and all of a sudden, what am I going to do the whole morning? I had no work, I had no career, I had no social life."

The answer, as it turned out, was right next door. Having enrolled her daughter in St. Joseph's College in 1995, Tetchie decided to check out its college department.

"It was more like going through all the courses and knowing which courses you don't belong in," she says. "I don't belong in the management department, that's not me. I didn't want to get into mass comm, even though I could be 'mass *comportable*' in terms of academics. They were planning to open a theater arts course which I was playing around with, but that got dissolved. I asked the registrar: what courses are good here, and she said 'psychology is difficult here but the teachers are good.' *O sige*, I said, sign me up for B.S. Psychology."

Much to her surprise, she loved it, even if she had to start as a freshman again, having to take P.E.

Higher studies

"Thank God I was exempted from having to wear a uniform because of my age," she says. "It might look good on me, but it's not right for me anymore. But they did nurture me and take care of me for four years at St. Joseph's, and I'm very grateful for that."

Tetchie graduated with a B.S. in Psychology from St. Joseph's in 2000 and found herself, at 39, wondering what she was going to do after college.

"It was either go back to showbiz full-time, join the corporate world, or pursue higher studies," she says. "I took one year to rest and really suss it over, and decided that I really wanted to pursue psychology." To her delight, she was accepted in the Ateneo de Manila University's M.A. program in Counseling Psychology in 2001, and the next three years were spent in the groves of academe, learning at the feet of such revered professors as Fr. Jaime Bulatao, S.J.

To page 7

Two poems by Ned Parfan

Low Tide

The sun surrenders to our eyes
in a blood-streaked sky,
our feet ankle-deep in sea grass and sea.
Behind us is Witches' Island
under full moon contrived there
by legend not of our own.,
We are no longer in its map.
We become an island chain wading
trusting our courage
before an ocean crouched down,
speaking names of lovers and beloveds
who are a hundred lighthouses away.
As the horizon turns to an edgeless dark
we walk back to shore across starfish domain,
our soles salvaged by sand.

Our paperboat stories
are left to chances of drowning,
rippling love spells and lore
with hopes of hauling back the tides.

Grandmother's Coffin Exiting

The stale air despairs
to disperse outside
this gray house.
Death of leaves
falls upon our steps
as we move out.

She will leave her trace
irreplaceable
on marginal things
like the boldly marked lines
on the chopping board,
the folds of her sleeping mat.

Her husband sobs
in his wheelchair,
attacked by his heart.
On their marriage bed
her five-year-old stepson
fidgets with his legos

while the boy's mother,
the woman frozen
in a kitchen corner
with eyes on her toes,
wonders what to cook
for dinner.

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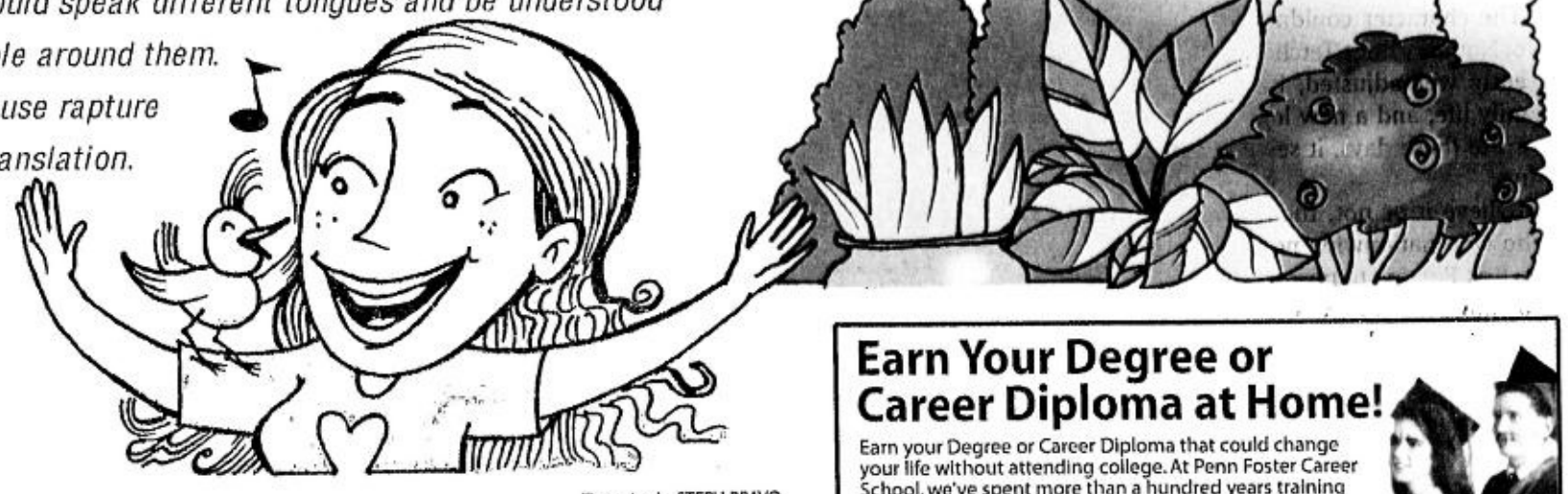
Solid Places

by Cecille Tuble, RC

When the Holy Spirit filled them during Pentecost, Christ's disciples could speak different tongues and be understood by the people around them. That's because rapture needs no translation.



Rapture

Illustration by STEPH BRAVO

ONE of the simple joys of "maidenhood" is the occasional chance to visit the family and babysit one's little nieces and nephews. The longing makes one receptive to what these kids have to teach us faded and jaded grown-ups, with the added bonus that when their angelic dispositions expire and they turn cranky, one can always return them to their parents without qualm or conscience. (My harried sister, taking back a squirming toddler in her arms, once lamented: "I wish they came with batteries!")

I was babysitting my 10-month-old niece, who was at that climbing and exploring stage when I was momentarily distracted. Before I knew it, she had discovered the marvels of the dining table's underbelly, and was now examining the intricacies of our dog's fur. Our dog, a gentle and affectionate German Shepherd, suffered the indignity with calm resignation. I hastily plucked the sticky-fingered pint-sized explorer and carried her off to the kitchen sink to wash her hands. I held her in front of me, and seated her on the rim of the sink with her feet on its cool surface. As I held her tiny hands under the tap and turned the faucet on, she blinked in surprise and slowly turned to look at me, her eyes big as saucers, lips half parted, with the most beautiful expression on her face. It was pure rapture. Rapture filled her entire being, and it took my breath away.

The memory of my baby niece's rapturous face lingered with me for several days, and brought me to the birthday of the Church which we celebrated last Sunday. Perhaps one way of reflecting upon the feast of Pentecost, when the Spirit came upon the disciples and Mary in the Cenacle (which we Catholics commemorate as the third glorious mystery of the rosary), is to consider this experience of rapture. Three points:

First, rapture means being awakened by glory into wondrous joy. From the drudgery of mere existence, we wake up to the stunning truth that, in the words of the poet-priest Gerard Manley Hopkins, "The world is charged with the grandeur of God." Perhaps this is why they call childhood "the wonder years"—children have not lost their innocence, which is actually an innate sense of God's goodness permeating the world, waiting to be discovered.

The journey into faith involves the same awakening: the God who came, "pitched his tent among us", suffered, died and rose again, and will stay with us forever. Life, as we knew it, is turned gloriously upside down, inside out, and made new.

Second, rapture is not just surprise at some pleasant discovery. The glorious awakening by which rapture bursts upon us leads to an overflowing, joyous gratitude. It is sheer gift marked by unbelievable abundance. The disciples at Pentecost were filled with the Holy Spirit, impelling them to proclaim and bear witness to what they had experienced. So, too, shall we, when we find the grace to live life gratefully, and therefore, joyfully and passionately.

Lastly, when my little niece turned to me with her rapturous smile, she did not (and could not) use words. Nor did I need any: I spontaneously responded with delight at her delight, drawn irresistibly into her joy. Perhaps that is why the disciples could speak different tongues and yet be understood by the people around them. Rapture needs no translation.

Joseph Campbell, the famous anthropologist who spent his whole life studying the wisdom of the world's cultures, was once asked what he thought people looked for in life. He surprised his interviewer by saying that, in his opinion, people were not really after the meaning of life. He said, instead: "I think that what we're seeking is an expression of being alive… so that we actually feel the rapture of being alive."

Pentecost is about awakening to the glory and gratitude of a God who restores and sustains us into life in abundance. Live the rapture. ❑

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Poetry

Revisiting Burnham

For C. and A.

What I remember is this:
A light rain falling
On the lake,
Falling on the concrete park bench,
On garden patches just planted
To daisies.

And we ran for shelter,
Underneath the precarious roof
Of a rickety boat.
Paddling about, we spoke of
Nothing in particular—
Only the dreariness of the afternoon,
Our boredom and aimlessness,
Our hopeless passions,
And how strange it was
That we had paddled so much
But had not gotten far, whichever way,
Towards whichever harbor.

And so I return to the park once more,
To remember how it was
To be young together, here:
It is the same crowds I find—
Though the willows have grown old
And weary
As I have.

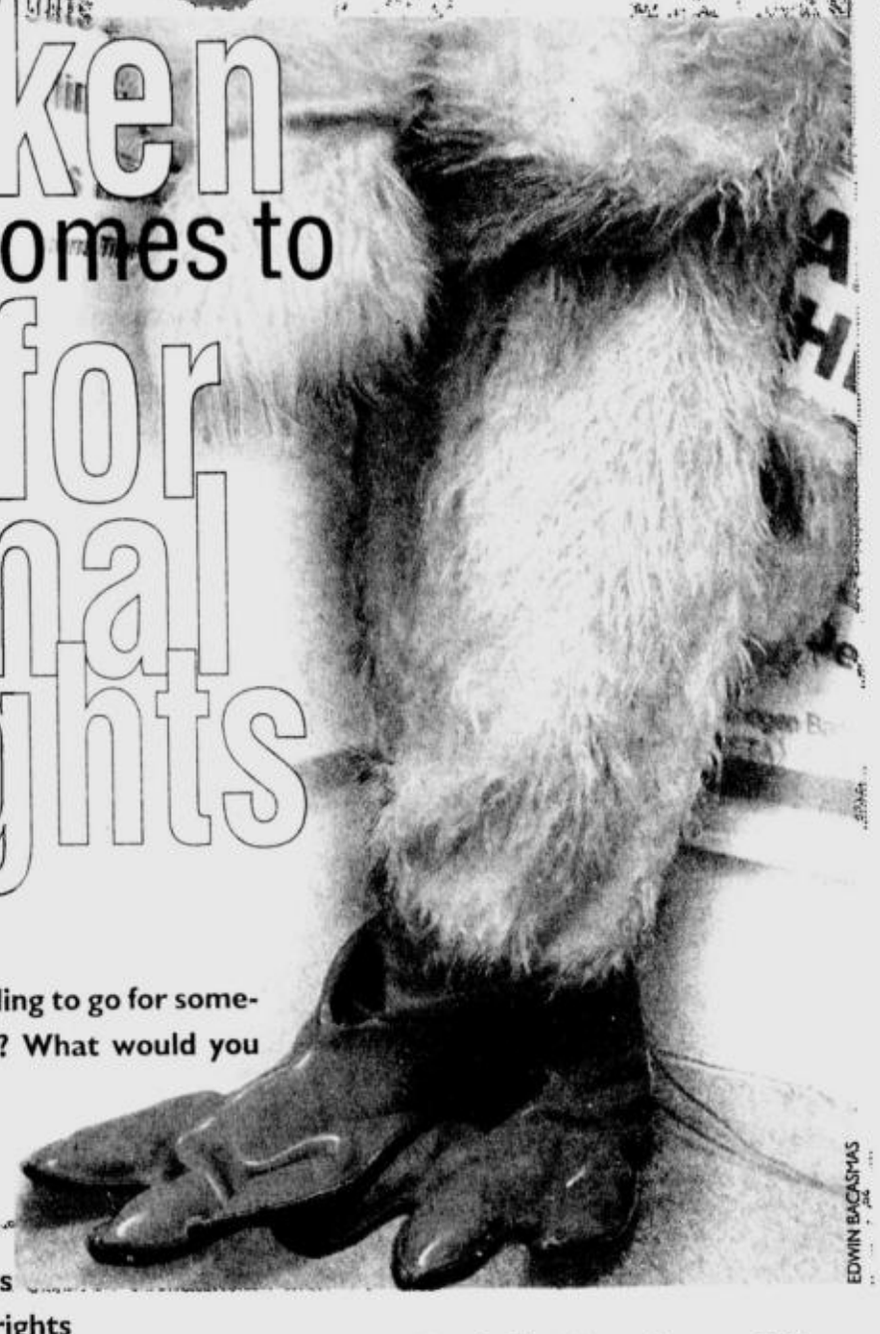
I do not know exactly
What I wish to find, or reclaim:
An effortless solitude,
Perhaps the sense of imagined depth
And vastness,
The un-murky future we secretly wished for
In that remote
And tranquil
Afternoon of our youth.

Priscilla Supnet Macansantos

The **Sunday Inquirer Magazine** accepts contributions for our regular poetry section. Interested contributors should send a printed copy of the poem (which may be in English or Filipino) together with a self-addressed stamped envelope to Ruel S. De Vera, poetry editor, Sunday Inquirer Magazine, Chino Roces (formerly Pasong Tamo) corner Mascardo and Yague Streets, Makati City 1263, or e-mail to <poetry_sim@inquirer.com.ph>

by Ruel S. De Vera

She's no chicken when it comes to fighting for animal rights



EDWIN BACASMAS

Rochelle Regodon and the animal rights group People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals are finally on local shores with their trove of attention-grabbing tactics, like splashing paint on people wearing fur

HOW far are you willing to go for something you believe in? What would you risk?

Just about anything, if you're Rochelle R. Regodon, the otherwise shy 30-year-old Campaigns Manager of the animal rights group People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) Asia-Pacific.

Regodon was once detained in Singapore for interrupting a speech by Australian Prime Minister John Howard and for dressing up as Santa Claus with a placard declaring "Peace on Earth for all Animals. Boycott KFC!" outside the chicken fast food outlet.

Held for over six hours after the Howard incident, she admits not knowing what would happen to her next. "But at least we got the message across," she adds. The message urged consumers to boycot Australian wool because of mulesing, the process of removing folds of skin from the tail area of sheep to prevent infestation by fly maggots, a practice that PETA activists claim is harmful to the animals. Regodon would eventually be released both times, with no charges filed.

Homecoming

That seems to be par for the course in the life of this woman who thinks nothing of dressing up as animals to get PETA's point across. The group has recently set up a seven-staff Asia-Pacific office in Makati. The posting is some sort of homecoming for Regodon.

When she was eight months old, Regodon's parents Manuel and Josephine moved to Hong Kong where they run a teaching center. This middle child among three kids took her BA at the City University of Hong Kong and went on to Macquarie University in Australia for her Masters in International Communication.

It was in Sydney as a volunteer at an animal shelter that Regodon, already an animal lover by then, educated herself on the concept of animal rights. "It wasn't just about caring for companion animals at home, but extending that compassion to other animals, period. That includes farm animals and those used in science. I figured I wanted to do more for them," she explains.

Regodon returned to Hong Kong to take up her rather ho-hum existence as editor in a financial firm, but not before hooking up with PETA Asia-Pacific director Jason Baker. That was in 2002. Starting out as a part-time volunteer, she eventually became a full-time volunteer and currently, Campaigns Manager.

The Hong Kong permanent resident who spoke Cantonese found that she had to learn to speak Filipino, starting with what she calls "Barok Tagalog." Being a vegan in the Philippines turned out to be less of a challenge, she realized. The country is much more vegan-friendly than she expected, says Regodon. "I've even started to cook. I was just so surprised that I could cook vegan dishes on my own with all the options available in local supermarkets."

PETA Asia-Pacific handles campaigns throughout Asia, including Australia and New Zealand, but excluding India, which has its own PETA office. Though PETA's Makati office was only established early this year, animal rights activists have been active here for several years now. And they've certainly kept busy.

Animal welfare standards

The group once had protesters crammed into cages in Harrison Plaza to protest KFC's way of handling chickens. They also put up a 50-foot billboard beside a KFC outlet along Edsa that depicted KFC founder Col. Sanders stabbing a chicken. The billboard was taken down within the day. PETA's beef with KFC, Regodon says, lies in the chain's refusal to institute animal welfare standards, unlike other chains like McDonald's and Burger King.

The group's stand extends beyond the use of animals as food. On Tuesday this week, PETA led a protest action right outside the Manila Zoo to stress the organization's stand about animals being kept in captivity. "What we do is bring the message out there for the public to talk about. We are a PR firm for animals," says Regodon. "We want all animals to be left alone. People can do things like not go to zoos or become vegetarian, which is the best way because then you save 70 animals a year."

Go vegan

Going vegetarian is at the heart of PETA's push in the Philippines. "We're not a particularly meat-eating society," observes Regodon. "Like other countries in Asia, we're just accustomed to the idea that meat is a staple. It doesn't have to be. People weren't meant to eat meat in the first place."

Regodon is part of a vanguard that disseminates PETA's ideas through media, be it printed leaflets, websites and, yes, the unique protests that PETA is famous—or notorious—for. This is, after all, the organization known for splashing paint at people wearing fur in other countries. In the group's long-running feud with Vogue editor in chief Anna Wintour, PETA members once threw a tofu pie in this fashion editor's face in Paris and dunked a dead raccoon into her lunch in New York. PETA takes umbrage at Wintour's continued use of fur in her magazine's fashion spreads.

Some might call them crazy or over-the-top, but Regodon says that their antics are all part of waging a battle for minds in the current climate. "We think out of the box. We're creative and use different strategies. We need to get people to sit up and take notice. If we do generic things, people aren't likely to talk about the issue," she says. "This is the MTV generation and we sometimes need to use shock tactics."

The group's campaign for vegetarianism has also spawned very slick ads that feature celebrities shedding their clothes to promote the idea of going without meat. In the Philippines, the best-known example is the eye-catching print ad featuring model Isabel Roces on a bed of red chili peppers. "She's so fantastic to work with," says Regodon.

The Philippines, she notes, makes for an excellent nerve center for PETA despite the lack of Internet connectivity in the country's rural areas that prevent more people from accessing PETA's materials online. "Here in Asia, this is where we need to be," says Regodon. "We need to reach a larger audience. There's a lot to do in Asia and that's why we're here. Very few groups focus on animal rights though there are a lot of animal welfare groups," she says.

Bigger picture

She notes that while people in the Philippines are quite aware of the need to be kind to their "companion animals" (their preferred term for "pets," which they say denotes some kind of ownership), many Filipinos don't see farmed animals the same way. "Unfortunately, people still see farmed animals as food. People need to go beyond that and look at the bigger picture."

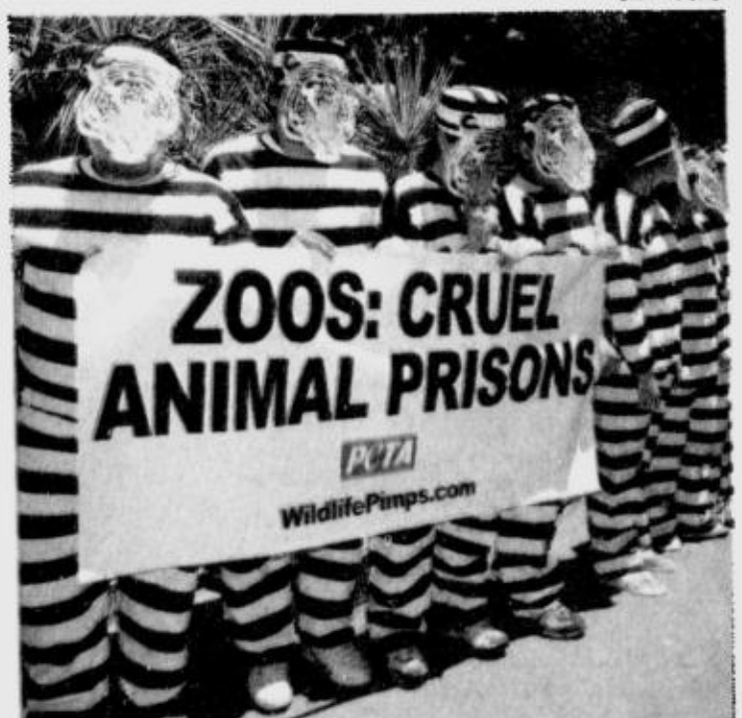
It also hasn't escaped their notice that PETA shares the same acronym with the pioneering Philippine Educational Theater Association. "People who want to contact us get to them by chance, and vice-versa," says Regodon. The staff of both organizations ends up amicably fielding each other's calls.

Constantly in search of volunteers, PETA Asia-Pacific intends to work with other animal rights' groups such as the Philippine Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) on its more localized campaigns. It also intends to set up a permanent Hong Kong office.

In the meantime, PETA Asia-Pacific is raring to get out there and spread its wings. It's ready to make a racket, whether the Philippines is ready or not. And Rochelle Regodon isn't about to chicken out. "People think it's ridiculous (that we dress up as animals), but we're really making a statement that people need to be aware of. And for that, we're willing to do what it takes."

For more information, log on to http://www.pinoyveg.org, or e-mail pilipinas@peta.org. You may also call or text 0919-5318314 or 0915-5175271.

ERIK ARAZAS



Regodon and her PETA mates earn their stripes in this protest against the Manila Zoo

Freeze

Clowning at the Khumbu after "summiting": (From left) Allan Gutierrez, Gemmo Soho, Romi Garduce, Dennis Mariano, myself and Buboy Pacursa

Covering th Mt. Eve left brea

Inside the equipment tent, editing my video, "Everest Watch"

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First Person

by Jiggy Manicad

We slept on blocks of ice, took a total of one shower in a month and found our steps and brain slowing down as we trekked up the mountain. At 17,500 feet, we had to learn to function well despite being deprived of one basic tool for survival: AIR!

frame: rest climb me thless

ASE Camp, Mt. Everest—When the GMA Team Everest started its physical training last March, I could barely do crunches. Completing 30 of them drove me to the brink of losing consciousness. Lifting a barbell the size of a hamburger patty left me breathless.

Fortunately, by the time our trainer, Prof. Bert Madrigal of the University of the Philippines College of Human Kinetics, was through with me, I could do 600 crunches, lift weights heavier than my body mass, and jog for about seven kilometers.

Such pre-coverage preparation partly explains why the Mt. Everest project was easily the most difficult in my career.

In my years of journalism, I have found myself in the middle of an Al Qaeda bombing in London, the start of the hunt for Osama Bin Laden in Jalalabad, Eastern Afghanistan, pre-war Iraq, a helicopter crash in Nueva Ecija, Marine operations in Mindanao against the Abu Sayyaf, the Malacañang siege by Estrada loyalists on May 1, 2001, and anti-kidnapping operations in Leyte and Metro Manila, not to mention countless disasters and tragedies.

Small gasps

However, the Mt. Everest project more than tested our limits—we had to function well despite being deprived of one basic tool for survival: AIR. Working at Base Camp 17,500 feet above sea level meant we had to take small gasps of air, rather than breathing in deeply. We could not even drink a glass of water straight; we had to take small sips between resting, otherwise we could choke.

When we left Manila on April 15 for Kathmandu, Nepal, we were all excited to go to Base Camp. It was a historic coverage—the first attempt of one of three Filipinos to scale the summit of Mt. Everest. GMA-7 was sponsoring one of them, Romi Garduce, a thirtysomething IT manager from Bataan. Romi reached the summit on May 19. Two others, Leo Oracion and Erwin "Pastor" Emata, who were sponsored by ABS-CBN, scaled the top on May 17 and 18, respectively.

The political crises in Kathmandu and bad weather slowed us down for about two days until we were able to book a flight via Yeti airlines to Lukla town, the first stopover to Mt. Everest. From Lukla, we traveled 140 kms. through six towns that took us all of 11 days, not including days when we had to acclimatize ourselves on nearby mountains. That meant climbing areas as high as Mt. Makiling almost every other day even during our rest days, just to prevent high altitude sickness.

During our trek, I noticed that the higher we climbed, the slower we became. At the start, I could take an unlimited number of steps. But as the altitude increased, I could only manage 100, then 50, 20 and finally 10 steps. When we reached Base Camp, I was crawling, managing only three steps at a time.

Extreme conditions

In Lobuche, the trail was so cold and difficult I thought it would be the end of my career, and that it would end with a helicopter rescue. At Gorak Shep, the entire GMA Team Everest had its first shower after 10 days of trekking under extreme conditions; we were ecstatic. We found a hot shower room which cost some 300 rupees (about $4) for each shower. I enjoyed it so much I didn't realize that I had used up my ration of water in the middle of my bath. "Water, Mr. Phemba! Water!," I called out to the lodge owner, my body still covered with soap. Our next shower would be in Kathmandu, on our way back to Manila. In the meantime, we had to content ourselves with baby wipes, alcohol, and other antiseptic preparations.

We finally reached Base Camp on April 30. Almost nightly, I would wake up gasping for air. Oxygen is so thin you really need to exert effort to breathe it in, and even at that, you could only get about half of what your body needed. Just carrying a laptop from tent to tent, a seven-meter distance, would send me catching my breath. I felt like an asthma patient desperately reaching for his inhaler

On May 5, heavy snow fell on Base Camp. At 5 p.m., room temperature was 15 degrees below the freezing point. I zipped my tent to keep out the cold air, small comfort since my mattress had become wet from the melting ice beneath. I tried to sleep sideways but it felt like my ribs were crushing my heart. I could not even yawn because that meant inhaling too deep and there was not enough air to breath. That night,we suffered sleep hypoxia, or the sudden loss of oxygen at high altitude during deep sleep. Luckily, we survived.

While we had sleeping bags good for minus 27 degrees Celsius, plus thermal underwear and shell jackets, these were often not warm enough since our tents were standing on ice. Base Camp, being part of a 1500-km glacier, is rocky outside but solid ice underneath. Imagine sleeping on blocks of ice. To generate more heat, we would fill our Nalgene drinking bottles with hot water and place them inside our sleeping bags.

Awake for avalanches

Aside from the cold, avalanches and rockslides at night kept us awake. These would send us into jitters since Base Camp is actually in the middle of Khumbu Icefall and other mountains where avalanches and rockslides are common occurences.

In the morning, I would wake up with more than 100 heartbeats a minute, as if I had climbed a five-story building. Again, the thin air was to blame. Brushing my teeth was truly an effort and so was drinking. At Base Camp, drinking had to be timed with inhaling to prevent choking, and so was swallowing and yawning.

Using the toilet was another challenge for the GMA Team Everest. We dubbed the call of nature, "*magsa*-summit" and the toilet, the "Summit Place." Inside the Summit Place, the stench sent us gasping. We shared the two-meter high one-meter wide tent with our three sherpas, 11 porters, two cooks and the Base Camp manager. We had to do with a barrel around a pile of rocks, with a big zipper as our lock. When the barrel got full, it was collected by porters who were paid 75 rupees (more than a hundred pesos) per kilo of human waste. The barrel is taken to nearby Gorak Shep, some 10 kms. from Base Camp for dumping. While we had to cover our nose because of the stench, we also needed to manage our oxygen intake to prevent ourselves from collapsing. There were times when we wanted to introduce a new design to the special tent—a middle zipper that would allow us to stick our heads outside while we were "summitting."

Myself with yaks near the Khumbu Icefall

Frozen lake

We got our water supply from a nearby frozen lake, out of the hole in the ice that the sherpas had dug. Around the lake were the tents of other climbers. Fortunately, everybody followed the rule of keeping the frozen lake clean.

At 17,500 feet, the air is so thin it affects the brain. I misspelled words, forgot what I was going to say next, and could not even memorize a five-liner intro to a live report. The body's other repair systems are affected at this altitude, according to Romi. Nutrients are not properly absorbed, and the body deteriorates slowly.

On May 6, two more members of the GMA Everest Team finally arrived, loaded with advanced news gathering equipment including a generator and a satellite, a first in both Philippine television and Base Camp history. For several days, the airlifting of the generator was the buzz at the camp, especially after an American mountaineer, in a fit of rage, barged into our tent to complain about the noise it caused.

Aside from the right equipment—there was something else we were armed with: Filipino food! We feasted on *danggit, dilis, daing, bagoong* and *tuyo* personally packed by GMA News Vice President Jessica Soho, which were supposed to be our *pasalubong* for Romi. The guy had a taste of these delights, but he knew enough about our appetite to call us in his walkie-talkie wherever he was to remind us not to finish his *pasalubong*. Romi also taught Mr. Lunduk, our Base Camp manager, how to cook Filipino dishes like *nilaga, sinigang* and *ginisa*.

On May 15, Romi and Lhakpa Norbu made the final push for Everest, despite the fierce winds that blew our popular Summit tent out of its place. Romi was his usual self—funny yet focused. We had very good weather that morning, no strong winds, just clear skies. But several minutes after sending Romi off, an avalanche, which we caught on tape, struck Khumbu Icefall. Luckily, nobody got hurt and the climbers went on with their business. Romi would later describe to us the experience of being engulfed by an avalanche as something similar to taking a bath with baby powder.

Summit party

May 18, 2006. At 11:20 in the morning, Nepal time, I received a call from Passang, one of Romi's sherpas. The line was hazy, but I picked up the message clearly. He said, "Jiggy, we're on the summit right now." The line however was cut and I wanted to confirm his message, although by this time, members of the GMA Team Everest were already jumping for joy. When a member of the Malaysian Expedition Team volunteered to let us use their radio, I was finally able to contact Romi. His exact words: "Jiggy, *pare naka*-summit *na ko*, yahoo!"

Base Camp is not exactly a party place. Most of the time the place is quiet as climbers focus their energies on plans and strategies to summit Everest. But every time a team succeeds, it is given the right to shout at the top of their lungs. And this is what we did when Romi made it. We jumped and shouted and shared the success with other expedition teams. Our mission has been accomplished.

And we, the GMA Team Everest, couldn't be happier. Romi achieved his dream at his own pace, the way he wanted it. He refused to turn the climb into a race because doing so would have jeopardized his safety and that of other climbers.

That was what the summit was all about: the triumph of the human spirit against all odds. In this case, it also meant the triumph of three Filipinos: Oracion, Emata and Garduce, who brought along the nation's morale on their climb to the top.

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by Joy Rojas
photographs by Edwin Bacasmas

Neither age, illness and zero experience can stop her from racing on water and in life

Seven years ago, this stay-at-home mom licked breast cancer. Today, at 45, Sandy dos Remedios is making waves as a member of the Philippine dragon boat rowing team that has just won honors in two races in China

WHEN Sandy Iñigo dos Remedios signed up as a member of the Manila Dragons dragon boat rowing team last November, it didn't matter to women's team captain Mye Buenafe that the new recruit was a sedentary, stay-at-home mom of four boys with zero rowing experience. Neither did it matter that at 46 this August, she would be the oldest member of a team composed mostly of twenty- and thirtysomethings. "I'm older than some of these girls' moms!" exclaims Dos Remedios with a laugh.

And it certainly didn't matter that she has one breast. A breast cancer survivor, Dos Remedios underwent a radical mastectomy of her left breast seven years ago after doctors discovered that a mass, deemed benign by a mammogram and ultrasound abroad, was actually malignant.

"It didn't bother me at all," says Buenafe, who approved Dos Remedios' application after she received a medical certificate from the cancer survivor's doctor pronouncing his patient in the pink of health. "*Sumasabay siya*. (She can cope). She does what everybody else does. We don't give her special treatment. She works just as hard as we do."

Indeed. While typical training finds Dos Remedios paddling with the team for an hour and a half at the Manila Bay twice a week, racing season requires her to show up five times a week. And if that wasn't enough, running and stretching are also part of the grueling routine. For Dos Remedios, however, the hardest part of the sport is having to rise at 4 a.m. to make it to the Cultural Center grounds from her Parañaque home in time for practice at 5:30 a.m.

This fighter vows: "No way am I going to stop!"

Paddling to victory

The early mornings have been worth it. Dos Remedios, who began competing this January, paddled with the women's team when they placed second in the 250-meter category of the 3rd Leg of the Annual Regatta. She was also among the members of the mixed team that finished fifth in the 750-meter category of the MBC Summer Sea Sports Regatta. The team paddled to victory as well in the 250-meter category of the Annual Regatta Finals.

Just last week, in Dos Remedios' first-ever international competition, the Manila Dragons women's team placed sixth in the finals of the 12th Guangzhou Dragon Boat Invitational Tournament, and third in the 1st Shaoguan City International Dragon Boat Race in China. The Manila Dragons men's team, meanwhile, fared just as well, rowing in second in Guangzhou and fourth in Shaoguan.

Joking around with teammates after practice, and radiating an energy akin to girls half her age, the tall and tan Dos Remedios is a far cry from the cropped-haired cancer survivor who could barely move her left arm after her operation.

"I didn't even know she had (breast cancer)," marvels Rolando Inocencio, a member of the Manila Dragons men's team. "But it didn't make a difference to me. In fact, when she told me, I said, that's great! I saw it as something inspirational."

A native of Davao, Dos Remedios has been a fighter all her life. As a child, it was she who beat up the bullies who picked on little kids; as an adult, she once told off a foreigner after she saw him speaking rudely to a Pinoy bagger in a local bookstore. "*Ayaw ko yung inaapi* (I don't like to see people being oppressed)," she declares. "I hate it, I get so mad."

While working in a bank she met her husband Raymond, for whom she became a full-time homemaker starting 1994. In 1998, while living with her family in the States, Dos Remedios discovered a small lump in her left breast. She had previously had a small and benign lump removed from her right breast and had gone through six months of chemotherapy. With a history of cancer in her family, she now takes the anti-cancer medication Femara for life.

Low point

Raymond describes his wife's chemotherapy period as a low point in her life. "There was the realization that life is short," he says. But the fighter in Dos Remedios had no time for self-pity. "We had just gotten back from the States," she says. "And I had to be strong for the kids."

It was her husband who first took an interest in dragon boat rowing. Bored with badminton, then the family's sport of choice, and overweight from the inactivity, Raymond looked up the Manila Dragons, and upon learning that they had a women's team, encouraged his wife to join. Sure, her muscles hurt like hell during her first few attempts, but Dos Remedios, who played basketball and volleyball as a student, kept coming back for more.

Contrary to common perception, rowing is actually a full-body sport. "*Lahat gumagalaw* (everything moves)," assures Dos Remedios, who chooses to paddle on the left side of the boat. "Your legs are moving, even your fingers and toes are moving!" But the camaraderie of the sport proved to be the ultimate attraction. "Imagine 20 people thinking and working as one," she says. "Isn't that beautiful?"

Diagonal scar

Such closeness extends to the communal restroom where Dos Remedios is comfortable enough to shower with the girls. "I tell them to check themselves regularly, and not to be afraid," she says in reference to the diagonal scar where her left breast used to be.

Fashion seems to be the only time when her being a breast cancer survivor becomes an issue. Dos Remedios, who pins some padding on the left cup of her bra, wears an undershirt whenever the team's snug uniforms are designed with a revealing neckline. "Actually, the only time she gives me grief is when she tells me she has nothing to wear," chuckles Raymond. "But I think that's true of all women!"

Otherwise, Dos Remedios is, as her teammates describe her, an inspiration. Recently, she ran her first 5K road race in a respectable 41 minutes. And this summer, to the astonishment of her relatives and sons aged 17, 15, 13 and 9, she solo-kayaked three nautical miles from Samal Island to Buenavista in preparation for the competition in China.

"My family was watching me from a big banca and they thought I couldn't do it. But I told myself, no way am I going to stop!" the fighter recounts, beaming. "It feels good! I think I'm going to do this *hanggang kaya ng katawan ko* (as long as my body can take it)."

Judging from what Dos Remedios is capable of doing, that sounds like a very long time.

For inquiries on how to join, visit the website www.maniladragons.org.ph.

This Week

Art

Tales from Bancas, a solo exhibit by Armenius Leynes with the fisherman's banca as theme, until June 14 at Hiraya Gallery, 530 UN Avenue, Ermita, Manila. For details, call 523-3331.

Directions, Irma Lacorte's works on paper at the Drawing Room, Metrostar Bldg. 1007, Metropolitan Avenue, Makati City until June 14.

Bakal, Pete Jimenez's exhibit of steel sculptures at Mag:net Gallery Katipunan until June 17. For inquiries, call 929-3191.

Portraits, a collection of never before seen photographs by Dominique James exposing celebrities without makeup or making funny faces, until June 18 at the UP Vargas Museum Lobby. For inquiries, call 928-1927.

Datuin sa Pasilyo Edades, recent works in acrylic on canvas and stainless steel sculptures by Joe Datuin at Pasilyo Victorio Edades, Cultural Center of the Philippines until June 18.

Parola: Colonial Lighthouses in the Philippines, an exhibit of photographs featuring Spanish colonial lighthouses located from North to South taken by architect Manuel Maximo Lopez Del Castillo Noche, until June 18 at the Fourth Floor Gallery Wing of Ayala Museum, Makati Avenue, Makati City.

Cinema

Raya Martin's debut feature film, ***Maicling pelicula nañg ysañg indio nacional (O Ang Mahabang Kalungkutan ng Katagalugan)*** will have its Philippine premiere on June 12, 7:30 p.m. at Shangri-La Plaza. A loving historical tribute, it tells the story of a child church bell-ringer torn between his duties to the Spanish state and as a Filipino, then a pubescent caught in the growing pressures of the revolution, and finally an actor in a rural community escaping his troubled soul.

Onstage

Benildanze, resident dance company of De La Salle-College of Saint Benilde will open its 2006-2007 season with **Mythos (The Creation)**, showcasing the creation myths of Japan and the Philippines through a dynamic blending of movement from both cultures. It will be staged on June 12, Camp John Hay, Baguio City; June 28 to 29, Philamlife Theater, UN Avenue, Manila; and July 6 to 7 DLS-CSB. For details, contact 526-7441 to 47 loc. 168.

Tanghalang Pilipino presents two of its entries to the International Theater Festival at the Cultural Center of the Philippines: Samuel Beckett's **Godot, Wer is U?** on June 22, 23, 8 p.m.; June 24, 25, 3 p.m. at Tanghalang Aurelio Tolentino and Carlo Vergara's **ZsaZsa Zaturnnah (Ze MuZikal)** on June 16, 17, 18, 8 p.m. June 17, 18, 3 p.m. at Tanghalang Huseng Batute. For tickets, call the TP office at 832-3661 or 832-1125 locals 1620/1621.

Music

Five generations of **The New Minstrels** come together on stage to hold a **grand reunion concert** on June 16 at the Aliw Theater on Roxas Boulevard. Sing along with your favorite New Minstrels as they perform hits from yesteryears and reminisce with old friends. For tickets, call 911-5555.

Atbp

On Father's Day, show Dad you care about his health with stylish gift packs filled with food and relaxation products that help lower cholesterol and blood pressure; relieve stress and anxiety, restore energy and mental focus. **Ihealth's NLite Gifts** has the perfect gift to celebrate his special day. NLite Gifts are products of Ihealth, 85A West Capitol Drive, Bo. Kapitolyo, Pasig tel. 636-6804 or email nlite@ihealthcircle.com.

Pinoypoets will hold a night of poetry and music at Rafa's Deli+Cafe (Unit C, 10 Xavierville Ave., Loyola Heights, QC) on June 17 at 7 p.m. Members will read their poems included in the group's second chapbook, "Obverse II." For details, contact Romel Samson at 0927-8470212 or Patrick at 0927-5204310.

St. Paul's College of Ilocos Sur Grade School Class 1970 and High School Class 1974 will hold a **reunion**, "Almost Golden: A Celebration of Friendship," on June 17 with a buffet dinner at the Mabuhay Palace, Manila Hotel. Contact Rory Bello-Verayo (0920-9209620 / 8203165), Armi Corpuz-Montemayor (0918-9177160 / 9325052) or Roselita Ruardo-Pinter (0917-4448350 / 3718279). The main reunion will be a three-day affair (June 23-25) in Vigan, Ilocos Sur. Contact Dr. Melissa Singson (0917-5682221) or Benjo Verzosa (0915-7971360).

Basic Poetry Writing, a seminar-workshop on classical, haiku and free verse writing to be held on June 17 at the Loyola School of Theology, Ateneo, QC.

X-manila

The exhibit **Nunelucio Alvarado: Obra Maestra** is ongoing at Galleri Graphitto, 3rd Level, Art Republic, Robinson's Place, Iloilo City and will run until June 20.

Pinoy Nga!

by Jess Abrera

The Sunday Inquirer Magazine welcomes listings of events in and outside Metro Manila. Please send announcements at least two weeks in advance, and include contact numbers for inquiries on schedules

SUDOKU

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Conceptis Sudoku — by Dave Green

4			6		7			9
					4	5		
	7		2					
3	2					1		4
				9				
5		1					9	6
					1		8	
		4	8					
6			5		3			1

Difficulty Level ★★★★★

6/11

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Answer to previous puzzle

9	6	2	7	1	4	3	5	8
8	5	1	9	3	6	7	4	2
4	3	7	5	2	8	6	1	9
7	2	4	8	9	1	5	3	6
5	9	8	4	6	3	2	7	1
6	1	3	2	7	5	9	8	4
3	8	6	1	5	9	4	2	7
2	4	5	6	8	7	1	9	3
1	7	9	3	4	2	8	6	5

Difficulty Level ★★★★

Tetchie...*from page 2*

The biggest challenge in her academic life came when she had to take a comprehensive exam, preparatory to starting work on her graduate thesis.

"Ateneo requires their students to undergo a sort of mini board exam where you have to restudy all the courses you've taken, so it was kinda nerve-racking," she recalls. "I was so scared I went to Quiapo every Friday and prayed to the Nazarene: 'God, if I pass this the first time I promise I will do one year voluntary work.' I made a *panata* (vow)."

Tetchie passed her comprehensive exam, but two days later, her father died in Hawaii. She decided to take time off to grieve, to think about her life, and to fulfill her vow to the Nazarene. By chance, she encountered one of her teachers who told her about a job opening at St. Joseph's Psychology department.

"They were looking for someone to teach guidance and counseling, which was right up my alley," she says. "I said that if I should serve somebody it should be my alma mater, so that's how I ended up teaching in St. Joseph's, as a fulfillment of my vow. But then I discovered that I had a passion for teaching. I enjoyed it so much that I derive a great amount of contentment teaching. I had a flair for it. I have the patience for it. I'm very meticulous. Showbiz teaches you to pay attention to detail, and I'm detail-oriented so teaching is good because you always have to be five steps ahead of your students. You have to be always prepared. Now I'm hooked on teaching, I cannot imagine not teaching. I'll still be teaching until I'm old and grey."

Her students call her "Miss Tetchie." Surprisingly, they seldom bring up her showbiz career, or her colorful past.

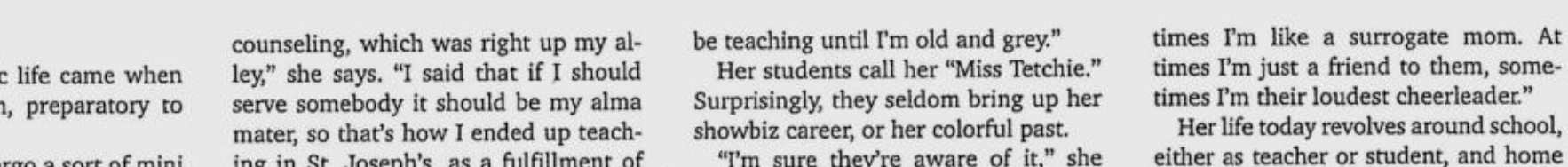
"I'm sure they're aware of it," she says. "I'm sure that although they're from a much younger generation their parents have told them about me. But that does not get in the way of my performing my job as a teacher. They've never raised it, but if they do, I will be more than happy to entertain their questions."

"I play a lot of roles for my students, depending on the situation," she adds. "Sometimes I act like a mentor, sometimes I act like a strict parent, sometimes I'm like a surrogate mom. At times I'm just a friend to them, sometimes I'm their loudest cheerleader."

Her life today revolves around school, either as teacher or student, and home where she takes care of China, now 13, and her 13 cats. She is still very much together with the father of her child, a prominent businessman, but they have chosen to live separately.

"We're very traditional in that way, *ayaw namin ng* live-in," she laughs. "We're still in the courtship stage."

With "I Luv NY," she has had to make some room in her life for acting again. But definitely, she reserves her real passion for the classroom.



PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TV GUIDE
Sunday, June 11, 2006

Provided by ClickTheCity.com

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ePLDT stresses web significance in PC Mag roadshows

EPLDT, THE COUNTRY'S PREMIER INFORMATION and Communications Technology (ICT) company, underscored the significance of the increased use of the Internet and how SMEs can capitalize on it by creating a strong web presence during the recent PC Magazine's How-To Roadshow, organized by Hinge Inquirer Publications.

Put your company on the Internet map

"The Web is actually an old technology, because almost everything has been covered in terms of what websites can accomplish," said JC Medina, head of ePLDT's data services group. "But there is still a lot of room for innovation, so it's important for those new to the Internet, especially SMEs, to know how to stand out."

Medina outlined what SME websites should possess to distinguish these from other sites. "Websites should immediately feature the products and services that the organization offers," Medina said. "It should have content that is easily scannable and most importantly straight to the point. Highlight what you offer: new ideas or products, cheaper rates or more convenience, even support systems for your customers."

For SMEs wanting to establish an Internet presence, Medina advised them to use technology to their advantage. "Availing of a web hosting service lets organizations like SMEs establish their presence on the Web in a quick and cost effective manner," said Medina. "And because this entails an investment on your part, you should look for a host that has the expertise to provide for your particular needs."

Web Hosting is one of the many services offered by ePLDT. "Our hosting service is specifically helpful to SMEs because it incorporates an easy-to-use control panel for quick Web site set-up and development, manageable even for those with basic technical knowledge," shared Medina. "We also offer domain registration, which is important since having your company's name as your domain name helps to establish legitimacy and is an important branding tool."

Creating the mobile office

Meanwhile, during the fifth leg of the How-To Roadshow, which focused on various technologies that can help organizations manage their mobile personnel efficiently, ePLDT product manager for communication services Jan Castro discussed how one can "Embrace the Mobile Lifestyle", by making use of the latest technologies to make better business decisions. "Most of us lead busy lifestyles and often find ourselves outside the office attending meetings or client calls," shared Castro. "Mobile devices allow us the freedom to continue our work outside of the confines of the office at the expense of limited access to office-bound information like files and e-mail."

While mobile phones have become indispensable voice and SMS communication tools, it is now even more important to the mobile professional when it becomes a medium to receive data communication like e-mail. "Having access to your e-mail from wherever you are gives you more sources of information needed to make confident business decisions," stressed Castro.

ePLDT's Mobile Exchange service, Castro said, extends office e-mail and attachments to the mobile workforce on their mobile phones. "It's a "true push" mobile e-mail solution which delivers all the benefits of real-time e-mail -- this means you get real-time information," said Castro. Mobile Exchange is secure and easy to use. "It uses the same messaging built into the phone users already know how to use. If you can SMS messages, you already know how use Mobile Exchange."

The true beauty of the mobile lifestyle is that it gives you freedom to attend to work without having to be physically in the office. With access to the information you need - even when you're on the move - you can be more productive while having less stress.

SMART, CHOWKING RENEW CORPORATE TIE-UP

For the fifth straight year, Smart Communications Inc (Smart) is serving the mobile communication requirements of Chowking Food Corp, the country's largest and leading Oriental quick-service restaurant chain. Since 2002, Smart has been managing over 900 corporate lines of Chowking employees in over 300 branches nationwide. Photo shows (from left) Jay Lagdameo, Smart corporate business group head, Cesar Enriquez, PLDT first vice president and corporate business operations officer, Raffy dela Rosa, Chowking Food Corp president and CEO and Angelito Santiago, Chowking HR director, during the signing of contract held at the Jollibee Center in Ortigas.

Nesvita initiates wellness campaign in the offices

IT TAKES MORE THAN AN IMAGE to achieve success in the corporate arena as it requires putting your best foot forward all the time. But to present your best everyday, it is essential that you feel good about yourself, inside and out. Thus, Nesvita ushers in its campaign of promoting the importance of health and total wellness in the workplace.

The Nesvita Wellness Tour is dedicated to guide office employees in living healthier and more meaningful lives which started on April 21. Major offices in the country host the wellness campaign which intends to promote total physical, mental and social well-being among the busy Pinoy adults. Office dwellers also learn the value of proper diet, physical activity and habits aside from practical health tips which are especially beneficial for busy people.

Partnering with health and wellness experts like The Body Shop, John Robert Powers and Slimmer's World International, Nesvita will present a series of activities and mini-seminars tackling topics such as Balancing Life and Career, Office Workout, Power Dressing and Stress-reducing Tips.

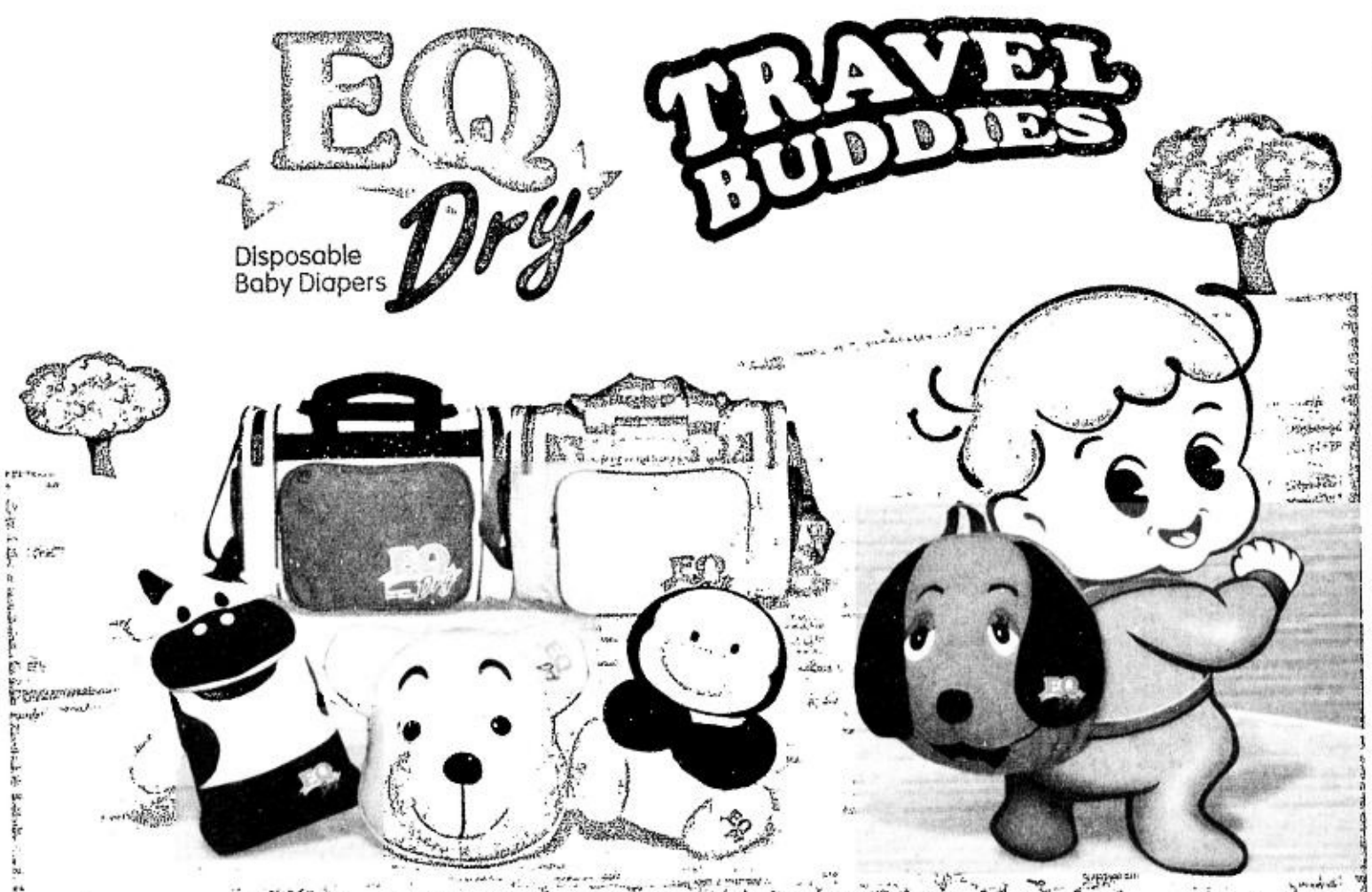
Aside from the health-enhancing knowledge they will gain from the event; employees will also get to enjoy samples of Nesvita products to help complement their effort to be healthy and further encourage wellness even in the workplace.

The Nesvita Wellness Tour is in GT Tower on June 15-16, Petron Mega Plaza on June 22-23, Westin Philippine Plaza on July 5-6, Pacific Star Building on July 13-14 and several other offices in Metro Manila including some offices in Cebu on Aug. 30 and 31 and Davao on Sept. 5 and 6. This will run until September this year.

"We know how hard it is for people to cope with the demands of their job that often times they neglect their health. Through the Nesvita Wellness Tour we hope that we would be able to empower them with the knowledge to take on a healthier lifestyle and make Nesvita their partner in living a healthier life everyday," says Lynn Gonzaga, AVP, beverage, adult health and wellness unit.

UNILEVER PHILIPPINES WINS GOLD QUILL AWARD

Unilever Philippines was recently awarded the Gold Quill Award of Excellence by the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) Philippines, at the closing of the 2006 Asia Pacific Communication Conference held in Greenbelt, Makati City. Unilever Phils was recognized for its excellence in the Communication Skills category, specifically for the company's in-house employee bi-monthly magazine, Sari-Sari. Shown are Jika Mendoza-Dalupan (AVP-coporate relations, Unilever) together with (from left) Bong Osorio (director, IABC Phils), Roni Tapia-Merk (director, IABC Phils) and Warren Bickford (president, IABC Worldwide).



PROMO PERIOD: MARCH 18 - JULY 18, 2006

MECHANICS:

I. Consumers may join by simply collecting packs with intact proof of purchase (POINTS) found on the packs of EQ Dry Baby Diapers. Points per packaging are as follows:

EQ DRY BABY DIAPER with cloth-like cover PACKAGING	LABEL POINTS
Mini Pack (4s)	1/4 point
Travel Pack (NB22s, S20s, M18s, L16s, XL14s)	1 point
Econo Pack (S40s, M36s, L32s, XL28s)	2 points
Jumbo Pack (S60s, M54s, L48s, XL42s)	3 points

II. Submit the required EQ Dry Baby Diaper wrappers together with the following information: sender's name, complete address where you want the premium item/s delivered, baby's name and age, telephone and/or cellphone numbers, signature of parent/guardian, and the desired premium item, written on a piece of paper and enclosed in an envelope. For hard-to-find locations, it would be best that landmark information of the address given be provided for easy reference.

III. Entries can be mailed or hand carried to:

"EQ Dry Travel Buddies"
JS Unitrade Merchandise, Inc.
31st Floor, Raffles Corporate Center
Emerald Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City

OR

"EQ Dry Travel Buddies"
P.O. Box 14280 Pasig City

IV. Choose from any of the following collectible baby bag designs with the required EQ Dry Baby Diaper label points:

Premium Items	Points
Baby Travel Bags: (available designs) A. Pink and blue color combination B. Green and yellow color combination	10 points each
Animal Face Bags: (available designs) C. Cow D. Bear E. Penguin F. Dog	8 points each

IMPORTANT:
- *Only packs of EQ Dry with cloth-like cover (plain or white) will be accepted.*
- *Entries containing cut-out points will not be honored.*

V. The chosen premium item/s shall be delivered by LIBCAP Express to the address submitted by the consumer. In the event that the entry sender is not present during the time of delivery, a member of the sender's household may be asked to sign a proof of delivery and receive the premium item/s in behalf of the entry sender.

VI. Delivery lead times for the premium items are as follows (commencing upon receipt of "delivery orders" by the courier):

a. Metro Manila: within 2 to 3 days
b. Luzon & Visayas: within 2 to 4 days
c. Mindanao: within 3 to 5 days

VII. Premium items will be delivered until 60 days from end of promo period.

VIII. Consumers may join as many times as they want.

IX. Prizes are non-convertible to cash.

X. Entries thru mail are qualified 15 days after the promo period.

For more information, please visit www.jsunitrade.com

Happy 1st Baby, Happy 1st Mommy!

LIBCAP

Per DTI - NCR Permit # 0813 Series of 2006

BPI HANDS OVER DONATION TO CNDR

The Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI) delivered the financial assistance for the landslide victims in Brgy Guinsaugon, St. Bernard, Leyte from the Expat Pinoys (the BPI brand for OFWs) last March 2. BPI's Remittance-Overseas Market Group handed the check for P114,343.45 to Corporate Network for Disaster Response (CNDR), the 14-year old network of companies and corporate foundations engaged in mobilizing resources of the private sector for disaster-affected communities. Shown are (from left): BPI Foundation program manager My Almogino, CNDR program officer Floreen Simon, BPI vice president for overseas market Raul Dimayuga, CNDR president and American Chamber Foundation executive director Robert Sears and Susan K., television host of NBN 4's Pilipinas Online Balitang OCW.

Digitel expands fraud management capability

DIGITEL, THE LARGEST provider of wireline services in Luzon outside the NCR in terms of working lines, announced the successful implementation of Phase II of its Neural Technologies' Minotaur Fraud Management System. The Minotaur FMS provides protection on all wireline, wireless and data services being offered by Digitel, including pre-paid services.

"We implemented Phase I of the system in early 2003 and were very happy with the results. Hence, we are extremely keen to implement Phase II of the project to further expand our fraud management capability in other areas of the business. The Minotaur system has enabled us to quickly and substantially reduce the fraud losses that we were experiencing. Fraud is a moving target and it is essential to have a system that can evolve in step with the rapid pace of the industry", said Henry Aguda, CIO of Digitel.

Since the implementation of the system, Digitel has experienced a sharp drop in the number of fraud attempts against the company's networks. The ability to quickly and accurately detect fraud means that Digitel was able to proactively identify fraudsters to disconnect services, and in some cases, to even prosecute the offenders.

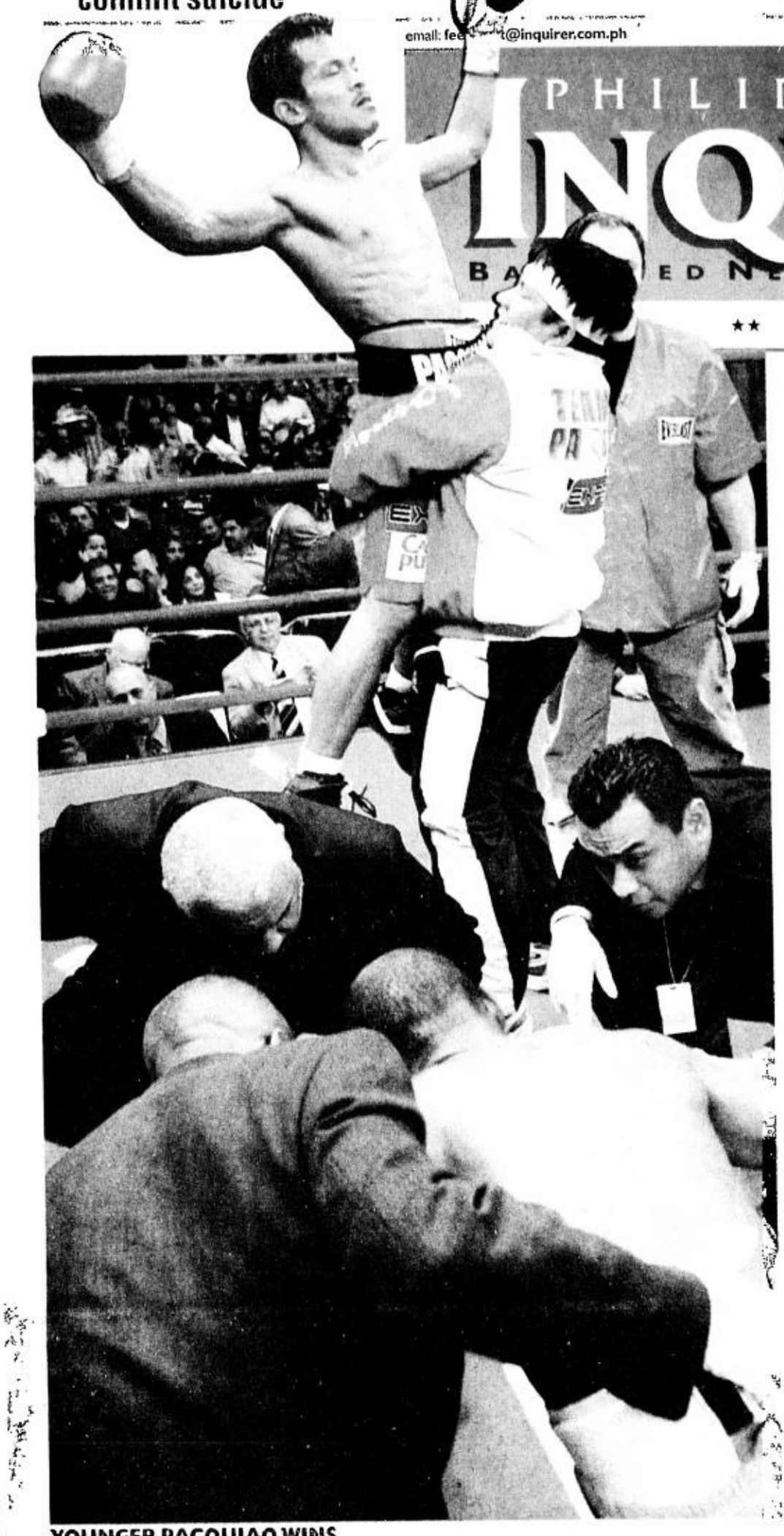
BEST COPY AVAILABLE

■ WORLD / A30
3 Guantanamo prisoners commit suicide

■ METRO / A26
Police bus in QC bombed

■ LIFESTYLE / C1
11 receive Gawad sa Manlilikha ng Bayan for folk arts

■ ENTERTAINMENT / A2-1
RP beauty queen feels she's next Miss Universe



YOUNGER PACQUIAO WINS
Bobby Pacquiao, younger brother of World Boxing Council international super featherweight champion Manny Pacquiao, celebrates his 4th-round knockout win over American Kevin Kelley during their WBC Continental Americas super featherweight title bout in New York. *(Story on Page A31.)* AFP

email: fee[illegible]@inquirer.com.ph

PHILIPPINE DAILY
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★★ 10 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 184 P18 website: www.inq7.net

8 injured in grenade blast at Lipa market

By Marlon Ramos
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau
and Luige A. del Puerto

A GRENADE EXPLOSION ROCKED A PUBLIC MARket in Lipa City in Batangas yesterday, injuring at least eight people in what police said could have been an attempt to sow terror following the failed assassination try on Gov. Armando Sanchez.

8 INJURED/ A11

Stop Cha-cha, foes cry on Freedom Day

Protests amid flag-raising rites

By Leila B. Salaverria and Luige A. del Puerto

THE SHRINES TO ANDRES BONIFACIO WILL BE THE site today, Independence Day, of multisectoral rallies seeking to pressure President Macapagal-Arroyo and her allies into dropping plans to change the Constitution and to condemn the continued killing of activists and members of the media.

Simultaneous protest actions are set in Bacolod City, Iloilo, Leyte, Samar, Cagayan de Oro City, Zamboanga, Nueva Vizcaya and Baguio City.

In keeping with the symbolism, members of workers' groups will tear up copies of the proposed changes to the Charter at the Bonifacio shrine in Balintawak, Quezon City, where Bonifacio and members of the Katipunan were believed to have torn their *cedulas* (residence certificates) to shreds in 1896 to signify the cutting of all ties with the Spanish colonizers.

The tearing up of *cedulas* signaled the start of the Philippine Revolution.

"We have gone through a process of discernment and we believe now is the right time for action. The June 12 activity is a good opportunity for all groups to come together and make a stand against Ms Arroyo's Charter change," Catholic priest Fr. Jose Dizon of the group Kairos said in a statement.

While militant groups were set to stage protest rallies nationwide, Malacañang expressed the hope that today's Independence Day celebrations would be peaceful and an "occasion for unity and not division."

President Macapagal-Arroyo will begin the celebrations with a flag-raising and wreath-laying at the

STOP CHA-CHA/ A10

Bill to award ₱10M to Leo's family

By TJ Burgonio
and Leila B. Salaverria

HOW MUCH IS THE PAIN FELT BY the family of a man wrongfully executed worth?

The answer seems to be in the bill being prepared by Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. seeking compensation for the family of Leo Echegaray, who was executed by lethal injection in 1999 after being convicted of raping the daughter of his common-law wife.

The bill sets aside the amount of P10 million for Echegaray's family and will serve as the government's "expression of

BILL/ A13

Soccer is the sport of the underdog

By Amando Doronila

ANALYSIS

IN THE SECOND GAME LAST WEEKEND of the 18th World Cup, which kicked off in Munich on Thursday, Trinidad and Tobago, the smallest nation competing among 32 survivors of an elimination round involving 100 national teams, held Sweden to a 0-0 draw in Group B.

The indomitable defense put up by T&T's 11 against the relentless bombardment of its goal by Sweden put the twin-island Caribbean nation on the map of no less than two billion TV viewers all over the world.

The two soccer games of the first week proved that more than the Olympic Games, basketball, baseball, cricket or Grand Slam tennis, the World Cup is the most engrossing spectator sporting event on Planet Earth, claiming a truly universal following in all continents and in all social classes.

The T&T-Sweden draw did not disappoint fans in their expectations that the World Cup is the only arena where an underdog—and the tiniest country on earth at that—has a sporting chance of upsetting even the mightiest military power and wealthiest country.

It is this lore of the World Cup that has drawn the poorer countries of Africa, Latin America and the Islamic world onto its playing fields since the founding of the international football federation Fifa in the alleyways of Paris in 1904.

Trinidad and Tobago lifted the spirits of less regarded teams. The T&T squad had been written off before the balls started

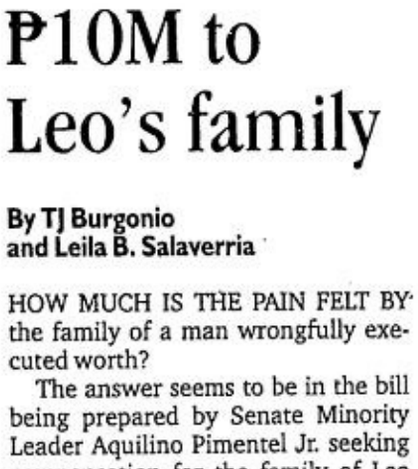
SOCCER/ A11

Dilangalen urges SC: Pls correct error on Erap, too

By Nelson F. Flores

SINCE THE SUPREME COURT has admitted to committing a judicial error in the execution of Leo Echegaray, could it also have made a mistake in ruling that former President Joseph Estrada had re-

DILANGALEN/ A13



Evacuation centers ready for Bulusan villagers

By Niño Jesus Orbeta
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau
and Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

MEDICINE, FOOD AND EVACUATION centers are at the ready in Casiguran, Sorsogon, after the Municipal Disaster Coordinating Council met yesterday with barangay leaders as part of preparations in anticipation of the eruption of Mt. Bulusan.

The volcano was calm yesterday but residents of the town complained of warm weather.

Casiguran Mayor Edwin Hamor, MDCC chair, emphasized "calmness and preparedness during (relief) operations" before and after any eruption.

Hamor said "alertness is very important" in protecting people's lives.

As residents of Casiguran prepared for an eruption, survivors of the 1991 Mt. Pinatubo eruptions and those involved in disaster response in Central Luzon offered advice to residents and local government officials of Sorsogon.

Jose Cunanan, a farmer from Mexico, Pampanga, said authorities should not view the refusal of farmers to leave the area surrounding the volcano as plain stubbornness.

EVACUATION/ A12

WITH classes suspended because of continued ash explosions from Mount Bulusan in the background, children wearing protective masks find time to play in a farm in Barangay San Juan in Casiguran, Sorsogon. NINO JESUS ORBETA/PDI SOUTHERN LUZON BUREAU

UN honors 53 RP cops in Kosovo

By Ayan C. Mellejor
Contributor

PRISTINA, KOSOVO—THE 53 MEMbers of the Philippine police contingent deployed here were recently honored by the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (Unmik) "for their significant contribution to the peacekeeping efforts."

Kosovo has been under the UN protectorate since 1999 to prevent attacks from Serbia, which continues to view Kosovo as a province.

Kosovars are fighting for their independence from Serbia.

The Filipino policemen, who are assigned to different units—from special operations to training to the civilian unit in the mission—work hard to maintain peace and security here, according to Hans Zimmerman, deputy commissioner for administration of the Unmik.

Most of the Filipino policemen

UN HONORS/ A12

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MONDAY, JUNE 12, 2006

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FRONTPAGE

Text us your feedback: inquirer news name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Northern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms mostly in the afternoon or evening.

COMPILED BY KATE V. PEDROSO, PDI RESEARCH/06/11/06 SOURCE PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Abenojar arrives from Nepal

Mountain climber refuses to talk about exploits just yet

By Nikko Dizon

DALE ABENOJAR, THE CONTROVERSIAL MOUNtaineer claiming to be the first Filipino to reach the summit of Mt. Everest, arrived yesterday afternoon minus the fanfare that the first three Filipino climbers had enjoyed.

Abenojar's face showed no expression as he and his small group made their way to the airport's immigration area. They arrived at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia) at 3:35 p.m. via Thai Airways flight TG 620.

Aside from his wheelchair-bound Sherpa (a member of a Tibetan tribe living in Nepal who provide support to foreign trekkers and mountain climbers), Pasang Dorchi Sherpa, he was accompanied by another Sherpa; Tshiring Sherpa, his Everest base camp manager, Ramkrishna Triphati, and a friend, Robin Mendoza.

It was a stark contrast to the festive atmosphere that greeted Everest climbers Leo Oracion, Erwin "Pastour" Emata and Romi Garduce only a few weeks ago.

There were no welcome banners and no cheering crowds. Only his family and a few friends were at the airport to welcome him.

Abenojar, 43, received tight embraces from his wife, Liza, and from his young daughters Alexandra, Kitty, Danny and Raffy.

Alex, 11, cried while hugging her father who had been away for three months. "I missed him," she said.

God and luck

"First of all, I thank God for letting me realize my lifelong dream of reaching the summit of Mt. Everest and to return alive," Abenojar said in Filipino as he fought back tears.

"I also want to thank my friends who remained true and those who helped me return home so I could be with my family," he said.

Abenojar was wearing slippers, since the big toe of his left foot was in a bandage, a result of frostbite, he said.

He declined to answer questions about the controversy fanned by his announcement that he had reached the summit of Everest on May 15, ahead of Oracion and Emata who got there on May 17 and 18, respectively, and Garduce who made it to the top on May 19.

He also refused to explain why he chose to climb the more difficult side of Everest called the North Face.

High altitude

His friend and spokesperson Mendoza said that Abenojar would answer all questions in the coming days.

"[Our] position is that we [don't want] to diminish the significance of the whole event considering the Philippine milestones in high altitude mountaineering," Mendoza told reporters.

"We did not come here to confront [anyone or to] prove anything. We are standing down. We have [consistently stood] against prejudiced and biased reporting. [It is a personal] assault to us and to this event," he added.

In an earlier interview, Oracion, acknowledged to be the first Filipino to reach the Everest summit, had said that he did not mind if Abenojar's claim was proven to be true.

"It's not really important to me if I'm the first Filipino on Everest or not. What's important is we were able to show the world that the Filipino can reach the Everest summit," Oracion had said.

Only Filipino

In a brief, impromptu press conference, Abenojar only answered questions about his acclimatization.

"The acclimatization was done step by step, first in Katmandu until we reached the border of China," he said.

Abenojar said he and his 14 team members and other expedition teams arrived at different levels of acclimatization aboard Land Cruisers, until they reached the Everest China base camp, which was 18,000 feet above sea level.

It was a convoy, 200 meters long, consisting of Land Cruisers and trucks that carried the climbers, Sherpas and the necessary equipment, he said.

Abenojar said he was the only Filipino in the entire group.

"On the second night, I had a headache, which was a symptom of high altitude sickness. I could not take medication because it would cause disorientation. I got well the next day. I also drank 4 to 5 liters of water a day to avoid getting sick," he said.

Documents

Mendoza said they had all the documents to prove that Abenojar reached the Everest summit on May 15.

"We'll give a statement soon and, yes, we'll show these documents," Mendoza told the INQUIRER.

Abenojar had brought to Manila Pasang Sherpa, whose toes also suffered from frostbite, to consult medical doctors.

Triphati, a base camp manager of Monterosa Treks and Expedition, Abenojar's outfitter, declined to explain why he came to Manila.

"It was a last-minute decision," he said.

Last Friday, Triphati confirmed with the INQUIRER in a phone interview from Nepal that Abenojar had reached the summit.

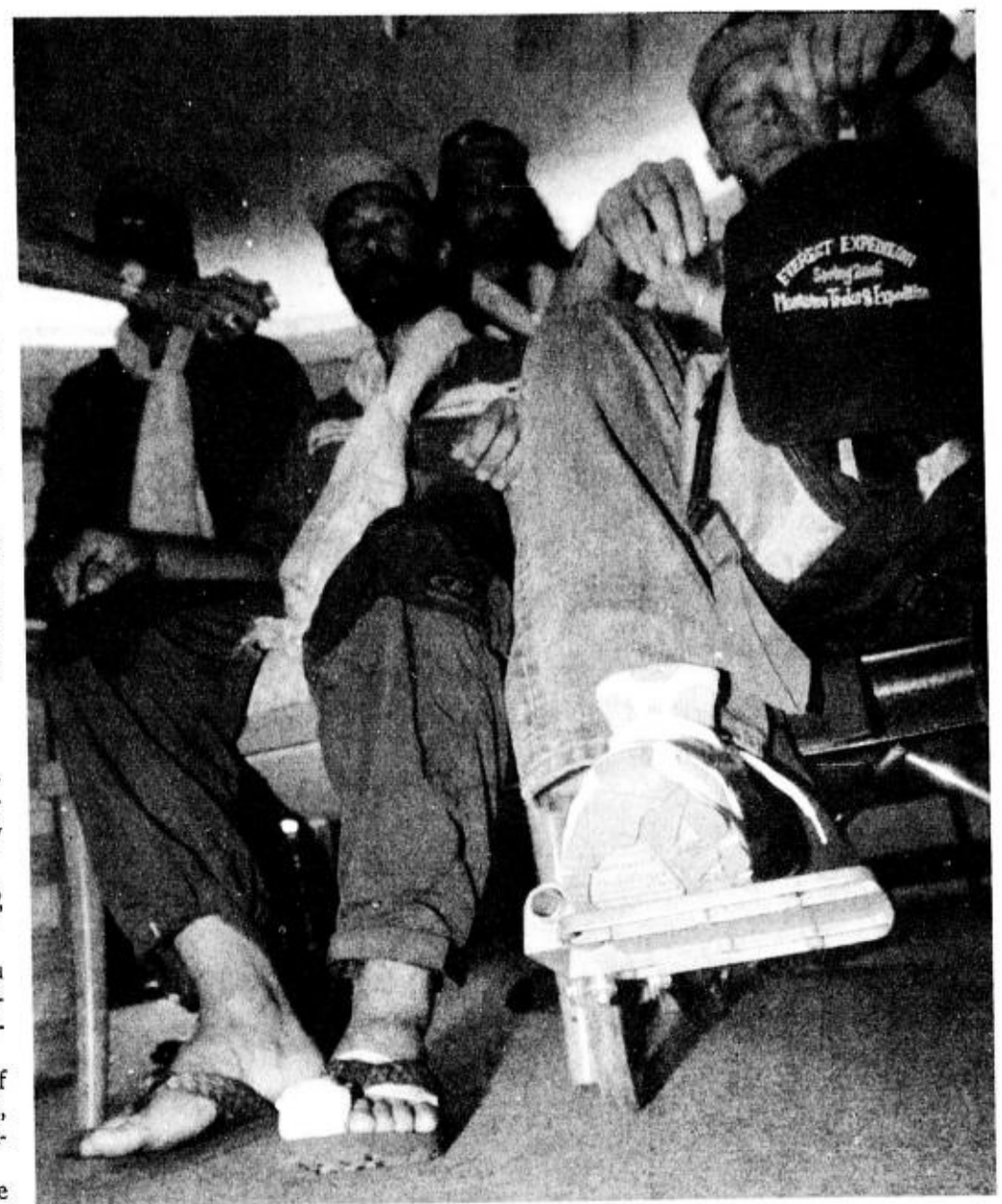
He also said that he saw the certificate issued by the China Tibet Mountaineering Association to Abenojar.

Super Dale

The INQUIRER reached Triphati after obtaining a copy of the Nepal Travel Trade Reporter which contained the article, "The Everest Story of Dale."

Triphati was referred to the INQUIRER by Nepalese journalist Rajeev Dongol who wrote the magazine story that was published in its May 29-June 4 issue.

The feature gave a glowing account of Abenojar's "feats and accomplishments," including being the first Filipino to reach the summit of Mt. Everest.



HIS BIG toe hurting and heavily bandaged, Dale Abenojar (left) rests a while upon his arrival in the country from Nepal yesterday with his mountain guide Pasang Dorchi Sherpa (right) whose shoes hide his own gangrenous toes. JESS YUSON

Gasoline, diesel prices raised again

AFTER A TWO-WEEK LULL, OIL COMPANIES yesterday raised anew the pump prices of gasoline and kerosene, and also of diesel, by 50 centavos per liter.

Petron Corp. and Chevron Philippines Inc. increased prices at 6 a.m. yesterday followed by Seaoil Petroleum Corp. at 12:01 a.m. Total (Philippines) Corp. and Unioil Petroleum Philippines Inc. also hiked prices at 6 a.m. today.

Data from the Department of Energy showed that the regional benchmark Dubai crude inched up to a June average of $65.91 a barrel from $65 a barrel in May.

The price of unleaded gasoline based on the Mean of Platts Singapore (MOPS) benchmark for refined petroleum products, meanwhile, dropped to a June 1-8 average of $84.70 a barrel from last month's average of $86.80 a barrel.

But MOPS-based diesel rose to an average of $88.14 a barrel as of June 8 from $87.53 a barrel in May.

Since the start of the year, oil firms have raised gasoline prices 13 times or a total of P6.50 a liter. Diesel prices have increased 12 times or a total of P6 a liter, while kerosene prices have gone up 14 times or a total of P7 a liter.

The new price adjustments bring premium unleaded gasoline prices to between P41.29 and P43 a liter, diesel to between P35.29 and P37.28 a liter, and kerosene to between P39.69 and P41.50 a liter. *Abigail L. Ho*

Recto's solution: Put Senate, House in one building for harmony

By TJ Burgonio

PERHAPS IF SENATORS AND congressmen were housed in one building, the kind of bullheadedness that often leads to situations such as the one that prompted the collapse of bicameral talks on the 2006 national budget could be avoided, Sen. Ralph Recto has said.

Recto suggested yesterday that goodwill could not help but ensue if senators and congressmen regularly bumped into each other in the lobby or in the elevator on their way to their offices in the same building.

"There will be better rapport between the senators and congressmen. And this will reflect on our legislation," he said.

Holding office in one building offers many advantages, he elaborated. A congressman could go up to the office of a senator, or vice versa, to discuss a particular bill and find ways to resolve differing provisions of a measure.

"If we're in one building, it will be easier for us to go into a caucus, or hold a bicameral conference," Recto said. He, however, stressed that senators and congressmen should maintain their independence.

Recto conceded that the inability of the Senate and the administration-dominated House of Representatives to come together was an offshoot of the hostilities between the senators and Malacañang.

"This can't be cured by one abolishing the other, but by putting them in one building," he said, referring to the House move to have the Constitution amended in order to effect a parliamentary government.

Congress adjourned last Thursday without enacting the P1.053-trillion 2006 budget bill after discussions in the bicameral conference committee fell through over strong disagreements on one issue: The Senate's insistence on trimming the budget by P64 billion.

The Senate panel proposed that the P26 billion slashed from the programmed funds be realigned, but its House counterpart demanded that all the cuts be restored in full.

Malacañang entered the fray by threatening to veto the cuts.

Malacañang and the House blamed the Senate for the stalemate but Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and Sen. Panfilo Lacson yesterday said this was untrue.

Pimentel said the bill got stuck in the House for eight months and neither President Macapagal-Arroyo nor Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. cracked the whip on their allies to pass the measure.

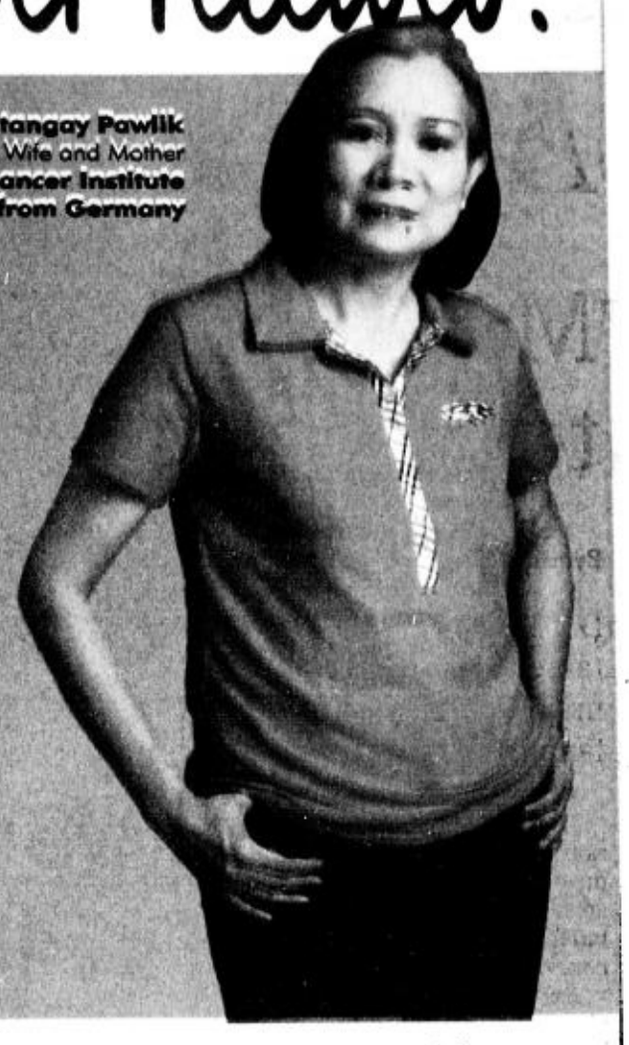
The House finally transmitted the bill in early April, instead of mid-November last year.

"So if the national budget was not passed, it was their (House) fault not the Senate's," Pimentel said.

"It's clear that they're trying to demonize the Senate by portraying us as villains. But if you really analyze what happened to the budget, we worked for the interest of the people while Malacañang and the House worked for their own personal interests," Lacson said over dzBB radio.

ST. LUKE'S CANCER INSTITUTE

This is the best treatment I've ever received.

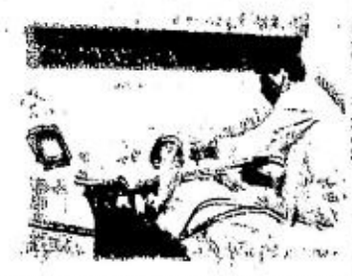


Josefina Macatangay Pawlik
Wife and Mother
St. Luke's Cancer Institute
Patron from Germany

"I immediately wanted to go to St. Luke's when they found a cyst under my breast in Germany," recalls Mrs. Pawlik, a permanent resident of Germany. *"I'd heard so many positive things about St. Luke's from my cousins that I knew I had to have my cyst treated there. My cousins were successfully treated for cervical cancer five years ago at St. Luke's Medical Center. They traveled all the way from Tacloban City to St. Luke's in Quezon City to experience one of the world's best in women's healthcare."*

Mrs. Pawlik underwent Magnetic Resonance Imaging, Bone Scintigraphy, Histopathological examinations with Immunohistochemistry , DNA Ploidy Analysis by Flow Cytometry, and Chemotherapy at St. Luke's Medical Center.

Mrs. Pawlik adds, *"My doctors are excellent. The staff is competent and compassionate. All my fears and anxieties immediately went away when I encountered these superb people at St. Luke's. They go out of their way to delight me by accommodating my special requests. I get one of the world's best treatment at St. Luke's Medical Center. It's perfect."*



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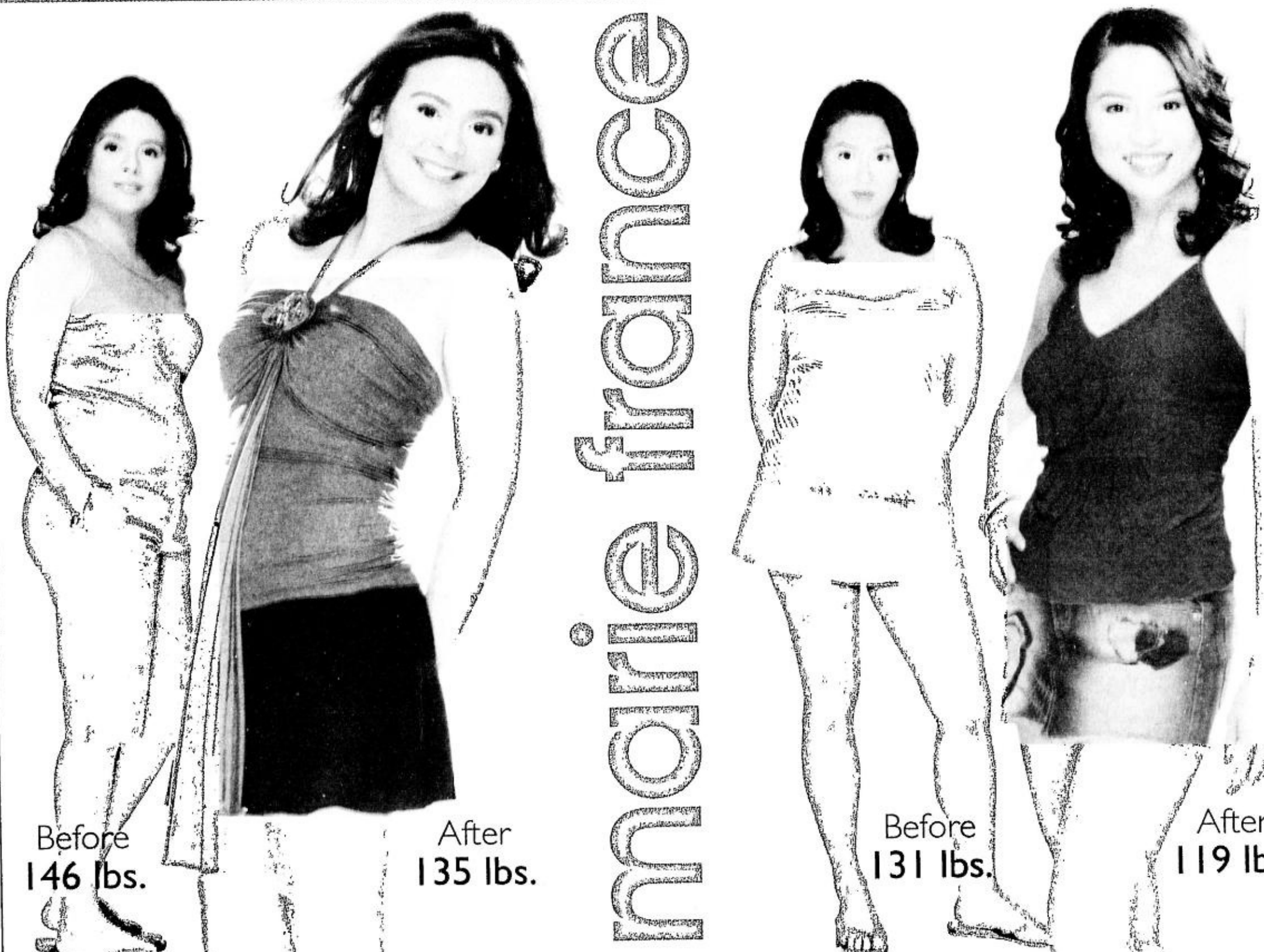

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With Villar at helm, Palace sees pleasant Sona

By Christine O. Avendaño

MALACAÑANG APPEARS UNperturbed by the changing of the guard at the Senate next month when Sen. Manuel Villar takes over from Senate President Franklin Drilon and finds it reassuring that there will be no awkward scene at the rostrum this time when President Macapagal-Arroyo delivers her State of the Nation Address (Sona) on July 24.

President Arroyo's political adviser Gabriel Claudio said yesterday that Malacañang was trying to be "ambivalent and as detached as possible" in the matter involving the Senate presidency.

Claudio said the change in the Senate leadership was "an internal matter of the Senate"

VILLAR

and the Palace had no hand in it.

"We don't want to be presumptuous about any change that may be favorable to the administration," Claudio said in a phone interview, adding that he did not deem it proper for the Palace to rejoice about it.

Less-stiff scene

"Suffice it to say, we would at least have a less stiff scene at the rostrum as happened last year," he said.

Claudio was referring to last year's Sona when Drilon and Speaker Jose de Venecia were a picture of how divided the nation was on the leadership of President Arroyo, who at the time had just been accused of cheating in the 2004 elections.

Ms Arroyo delivered her Sona one month after the release of alleged taped conversations between her and a top election official on rigging the election results.

As De Venecia and Ms Arroyo's allies cheered and applauded her speech, Drilon, who had earlier called for her resignation, sat glumly and did not applaud.

Takeover

Villar is set to take over the Senate presidency on July 24 when the third regular session of the 13th Congress begins.

But as Claudio put it, the Palace had no reason to rejoice.

Last week, Villar dispelled expectations he would be more accommodating to the Palace as he stated his intention of taking an independent, if not critical, stance.

Claudio said Villar's statement was "good enough for us."

The presidential political adviser said he expected a "more prolific" relationship between the Senate and the House because Villar, a former speaker, "is known to have an excellent relationship" with the House.

'Better appreciation'

Claudio said Villar had a "better appreciation" of matters of the legislative branch such as the budget and even Charter change, and this "makes for a better relationship between the Senate and the House."

Malacañang, meanwhile, is prepared to move on now that a new Senate leader is set to be installed next month.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said the Palace will "leave it to the people to render the judgment of history over the Senate's performance."

Bunye said the executive branch will just continue to focus "on the business of the nation, especially in further shoring up the economy to boost investments and jobs, improve education, feed the hungry, heal the sick and shelter those in need."

"These priorities will not be sidetracked by political poison and the degenerated system that the people now want to change. Institutional harmony is an ideal goal. Unfortunately, selfish personal interests often gets in the way," Bunye said in his "View from the Palace" column.

Pimentel bats for 'cooler' debate on polls

By TJ Burgonio

AFTER SEN. RICHARD GORDON'S "TANtrum" that marred the Senate's adjournment last Thursday, Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. now wants a "dispassionate debate" on the automated election bill on the floor next month.

Pimentel clarified yesterday that he and six other opposition senators were not opposed to Gordon's pet measure, but merely wanted to discuss its ramifications "dispassionately" when Congress opens its third regular session on July 24.

"We are in favor of automation," Pimentel said in an interview, but stressed that Senators Sergio Osmeña III, Alfredo Lim, Panfilo Lacson, Jinggoy Estrada and Jamby Madrigal wanted to introduce "their inputs" into the measure.

"The Senate is not a forum for physical violence; it is a forum for intellectual discussion," he said. "I see the impatience of Senator Gordon, but shouting and tantrums will not get bills passed."

Hours before the adjournment, Gordon blew his top upon learning that his bill would not be passed since the minority moved to interpellate him further. He then delivered a fiery speech rebuking the opposition senators, and even dared Osmeña to a fist fight.

Gordon lamented that his colleagues lacked the urgency to pass the measure that seeks to eliminate electoral fraud and speed up the transmission of election results through electronic means.

Gordon's proposal

Pimentel also disagreed with Gordon's proposal to do away with debates and put the measure to a vote next month to avoid further delaying its passage.

"That's a sign of youthful exuberance that should be tempered by reason," Pimentel said, adding: "We can't do away with debate. For all you know, if the proposed amendments are discussed, there will be more questions to its passage."

"We should clarify the perception that no matter the mode of counting the votes, if you give much power to the Comelec, it will hardly achieve the purpose of a clean, honest election."

Gordon's bill authorizes the Commission on Elections to use a tamper-proof automated election system (AES) partially in the 2007 elections and fully in subsequent elections.

The proposed measure amends and expands the scope of the current automation law, Republic Act 8436, by authorizing the use of an AES in the voting, counting, consolidation, canvassing and transmission of election and other processes.

The minority leader also allayed fears the bill's delayed approval would imperil the election modernization program.

"Realistically speaking, if we can pass the bill by August, then we will still have eight months to prepare for the May 2007 elections," he said.

Correction

IN THE JUNE 10 ISSUE, a front-page story—"Worst still to come, Bulusan folk warned"—misstated the name of Sorsogon division superintendent of the Department of Education. The acting DepEd division superintendent in Sorsogon is Marilyn Dimaano—not Nelly Beloso, who died last month.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

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MUTYA NG PILIPINAS
Kirby Ann Basken (center) was crowned Mutya ng Pilipinas-Asia Pacific International and Vera Eumee Reiter (2nd from right) was chosen Mutya ng Pilipinas-Tourism International at the pageant held Friday at the AFP Theater in Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City. Their court is composed of, from left, 3rd runner-up Lorraine Orpilla Erum, 1st runner-up Patricia Fernandez and 2nd runner-up April Love Jordan. RODEL ROTONI

'Happy ending' for FPJ kin

By Christine O. Avendaño

IT WAS A "HAPPY ENDING" AFter all, just like in the movies.

The family of the late movie king Fernando Poe Jr. may have snubbed the Malacañang ceremony conferring a National Artist Award on him last Friday morning but they showed up for the exhibit and tribute paid him hours later but this time outside the Palace.

Presidential Adviser on Culture Cecile Guidote-Alvarez said yesterday Poe's daughter, Grace Poe Llamanzares, along with her husband and son attended the Cultural Center of the Philippines exhibit and tribute given Poe and the six other National Artist awardees on Friday night.

Alvarez said she was able to chat with Grace who let her son, Brian, represent her father who was cited as the National Artist awardee for film.

"It was very relevant that they sent FPJ's grandson to his tribute which had to do with his legacy to the youth," Alvarez said in a phone interview.

The Poe family also joined the reception afterwards, she said.

For Alvarez, the "very presence" of the Poe family was an "indication that they were accepting the National Artist Award" after Poe's widow, Susan Roces, had refused to go to Malacañang to receive it from President Macapagal-Arroyo, who has been accused of cheating Poe out of the 2004 elections.

Alvarez said she intended to write a letter to the Poe family to tell them the golden medallion and National Artist citation were available and they could claim it.

"They will have to get it from Malacañang or we could make some kind of arrangement ..." Alvarez said.

She said it turned out to be a "happy ending" because the family acknowledged the award, which she reiterated was apolitical.

Clearing OFWs for travel just a click away

IT WILL BE HASSLE-FREE TRAVEL FOR OVERseas Filipino workers with valid documents from now on.

A departing OFW will no longer have to suffer the inconvenience of waiting a long time for his or her travel documents to be validated before being cleared for travel abroad.

"It will only take the OFW about five seconds to (have the documents) verified at the designated counters," the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) said in a statement.

The POEA said that an electronic database system that expedites the validation of documents of departing Filipino workers was launched Thursday at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia).

The OFW e-Link Deployment System allows airport authority staffers and immigration officers to make an online verification of OFW documents and data with the POEA.

Among these documents is the Overseas Employment Certificate (OEC).

Aside from presenting the OEC to the POEA counter at the Naia, a departing Filipino worker would also have to show it to the airport staff to avail of the exemption from the P550 terminal fee, and finally to the immigration officer who would determine the authenticity of the document.

Any doubts raised on the authenticity of the OEC, for example, by an agency representative from the POEA, the airport authority or the Bureau of Immigration could be checked on the e-Link System.

The OFW e-Link Deployment System is part of the OFW e-Link Program, which implements an electronic system among all government agencies involved in the documentation of Filipino workers, the POEA said.

The POEA signed a memorandum of understanding with the Manila International Airport Authority (Miaa) and the BI for the implementation of the OFW e-Link Program at the Naia.

Under the program, the Miaa and the BI will be provided with a network connection that would allow 24-hour online inquiry on the POEA's OFW database. *Nikko Dizon*

Turkish ship runs aground

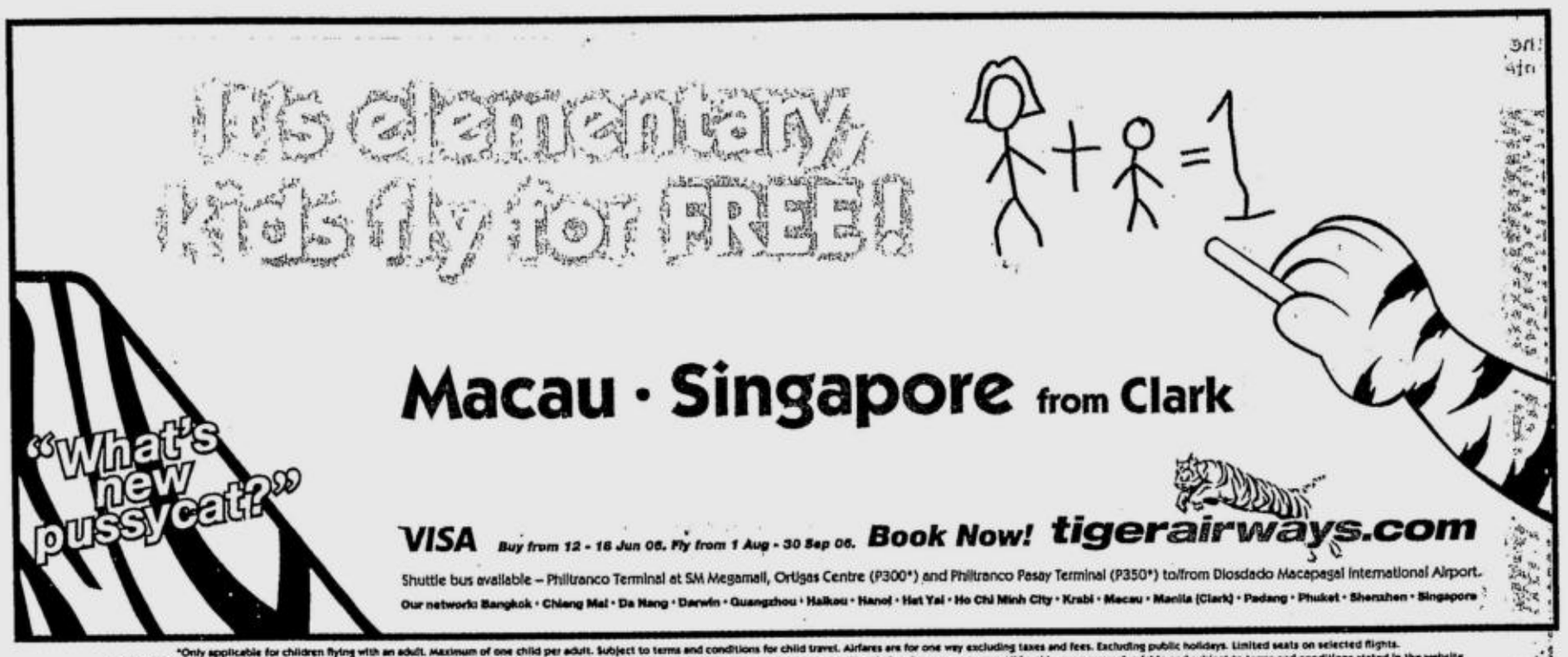
A TURKISH CARGO VESSEL RAN AGROUND off Tawi-Tawi province on Saturday afternoon, the Philippine Coast Guard reported yesterday.

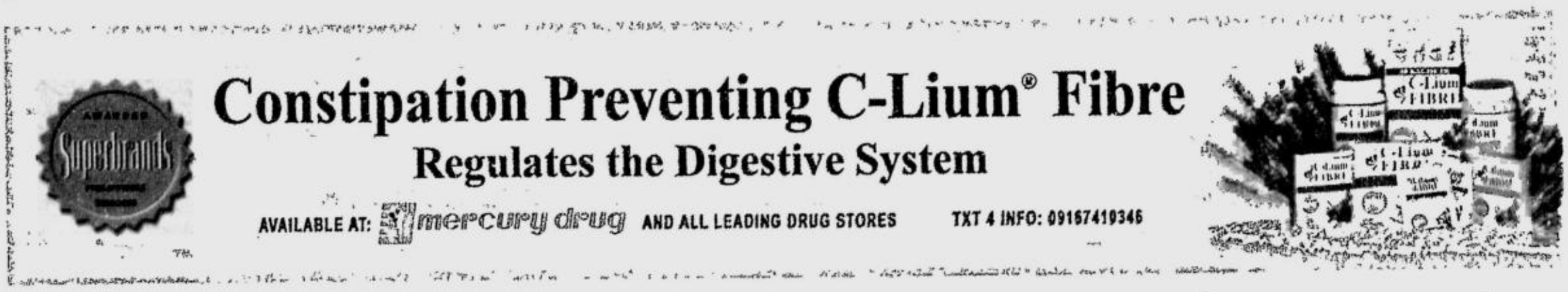
The M/V Kihram Asya, with 60,000 gross tonnage, ran aground 35 nautical miles west northwest of Mapun Island in Tawi-Tawi. At the time of the incident, the vessel had come from Malaysia and was bound for Singapore.

It was carrying 28 crew members who are all Turkish nationals, and a shipment of nickel. According to the PCG, the ship's captain had tried pulling out of its grounded position using the ship's own power to no avail.

The PCG station in Mapun sent its personnel to provide assistance to the grounded vessel upon learning of the incident. As of press time, the vessel had yet to be moved from her position.

PCG Commandant Vice Admiral Arthur Gosingan also dispatched members of the Special Operations Group to the area to conduct an underwater inspection to check the ship's condition, and to provide security to the Turkish nationals and their vessel. *Leila B. Salaverria*





Lack of personnel bedevils mining industry

PADCAL, BENGUET—AS THE Philippines's mining sector enjoys a long-awaited revival, copper mill manager Libby Ricafort has a problem—rival firms have poached half of the six staffers in his metallurgy division.

"Two of them left last year," the Philex Mining Corp. official told AFP. "I lost another one this year."

Mineralogists, geologists, mining engineers and experts in related fields have become the star targets of headhunting firms as foreign investors pour into the country's resources sector.

Philex—which operates the Philippines's lone surviving copper and gold mine under Mt. Santo Tomas here and has been in business since 1958—has not faced such a hiring crisis in a long while.

"Today the demand for geologists is very high," said Philex environment division manager Redempta Baluda, a former member of the government's licensing board for the profession.

"There is a gap in the geology and mining (fields) after the mining industry suffered a lull," said Baluda, a licensed geologist.

Reinvented themselves

"Prior to this mining boom, the remaining geologists had reinvented themselves and gone into teaching or went abroad. But now, my God, finding and hiring one is so difficult," she said.

Metals prices collapsed in the 1990s and a 1996 copper mine tailings spill unleashed a nationwide antimining sentiment that has not abated despite the passage of a stricter mining code confirmed by the Supreme Court in 2004.

More recently, a tailings spill at its mine in Albay resulted in the shutdown of Australia's Lafayette Mines there.

Baluda said only four schools offer geology training in the Philippines, producing 40 graduates a year in a country that has the world's third largest gold reserves, the fourth in copper, seventh in chromite and eighth in nickel.

"Our geologists in the bureau are being pirated by the private sector" where they are offered "more than three or four times" the government salary, said Antonio Apostol, head of the lands geological survey division of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau.

On the frontline

Geologists are on the frontline of the mineral extraction industry and are often assigned to remote inaccessible mountains and streams for months at a time to collect soil and rock samples to test for ore reserves.

Mining engineers then design the method for extracting the resource, while metallurgists analyze core samples from prospect fields and assay the mine's output.

The Philippines licensed just 2,758 mining engineers between 1927 and 2005, and only 875 remain in the profession, said Luis Sarmiento, director of the Philippine Mine Safety and Environment Association.

"Our profession is going the way of the dinosaur," he said in a speech at an Asian mining conference in Manila earlier this year.

Recent Philex recruit Venancio Gel Romero was one of only 20 mining engineers who obtained their licenses after taking the 2002 board exams.

But jobs in his field were then in such short supply that Romero accepted P10,000 a month to work the night shift at an IT call center, fielding queries from befuddled computer users half a world away.

Tidal wave of job offers

Now the bespectacled 28-year-old Romero fields a tidal wave of job offers, some of them from abroad.

"I think this field will become more popular due to the current boom in the mining industry," he told AFP.

It takes five years, however, to produce a new batch of engineers—about the same amount of time it takes to get a prospective mine into production.

Sarmiento said two of only five schools that offered the mining engineering degree in the 1990s had stopped the program, while the remaining three were struggling with nearly nonexistent enrollment.

"The gap between supply and demand for mining engineers is widening. This will worsen even further in the coming years," he warned.

Promising outlook

Some two dozen mining projects for gold, silver, copper, nickel and zinc are in various stages of development in the Philippines after the 2004 Supreme Court ruling opened the floodgates to about $1 billion in new investments.

The court ruling practically coincided with the start of the surge in metals prices.

The outlook for rank and file miners is promising here in Barangay Padcal where the lowest-ranked Philex employee earns about 44 percent more than the minimum wage and employees enjoy free housing and utilities, medical expenses and education for their children.

About 50 people apply for every job, said second-generation Philex miner Edgar Prangan. *AFP*

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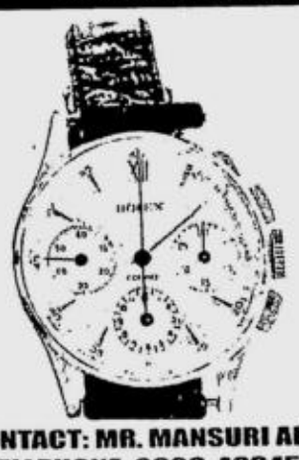

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PAGKA-UBOS NG ISIP : WHAT FILIPINO STUDENTS ARE LEARNING FROM PHILIPPINE TEXTBOOKS

ANTONIO CALIPJO GO
Academic Supervisor, Marian School of Quezon City

Here are some of the more than 500 errors to be found in the 250-page textbook HISTORY OF ASIAN NATIONS, SEVENTH (2005) EDITION ("the classic and best-selling textbook on Asia in the Philippines since the 1960s"). Written by DR. GREGORIO FERNANDEZ ZAIDE ("Dean of Filipino Historians" and "Mr. History") and his daughter DR. SONIA MAGBANUA ZAIDE (first Filipino M. Sc. and Ph. D. from the London School of Economics and Political Science, took up language and civilization courses at universities in Paris, Madrid, Malaga and Salamanca and has written over 50 books including the 27-volume "Tokyo War Crimes Trial"). Published by ALL-NATIONS PUBLISHING CO., INC. ("pioneering academic Christian publisher in the Philippines"). This textbook had been translated to Filipino under the title of KASAYSAYAN NG MGA BANSANG ASYANO, IKA-PITONG (2005) EDISYON ("ang pangunahin at pinakamabiling aklat-aralin tungkol sa Asya dito sa Pilipinas mula pa noong dekada 60"). This textbook had in fact been the subject of a series of articles on DEFECTIVE TEXTBOOKS which were published in the Inquirer in the year 2000. Six years later, the 7th (2005) Edition still contains all the errors I cited in those articles. Dr. Zaide obviously thinks the errors are not errors and therefore need not be corrected. Let the public now decide, before the 8th and 9th Editions come to life.

YOU MUST LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR . . . . .

• Only **Christ** and none of the other great religious figures has risen from the dead. Muhammad is buried at Medina, Abraham in Palestine, Moses at Sinai, Buddha in Nepal and Confucius in China. Thus, Christ is "the first-born among the dead," proof of his divinity and ultimate authority. Christ was certainly greater than other religious leaders, for he resurrected from the grave. His disciples preached a new way of salvation by personally accepting God's grace through faith in Jesus, rather than a religion of good works. • **Muhammad** claimed to be "the prophet of god (Allah)". His specific mission was to deny the divinity or final authority of Jesus Christ, whom Muhammad said was just another minor prophet like Abraham, David or Moses. According to Muhammad, there was only one god (Allah) and his greatest prophet was Muhammad. • The main reason why Asians are the poorest in the world is that most Asians worship many gods and have false religious practices but they do not know the One True God —— Jesus. Most Asian religions use images, statues and temples to represent God. (Accompanying pictures show a Hindu temple and an image of Buddha.) • **Saudi Arabia** is not a democratic country. There is a big gap in the lifestyle of the rich elders (sheiks) and the common people. The rich oil sheiks live in fabulous wealth, with palatial mansions, numerous servants and bodyguards, airconditioned rooms and cars imported from abroad. Most Arabs are poor illiterate desert nomads who do not like regular work or discipline. They are content to be dependents. Women are considered the property of their father or husband. The Saudis did not invest their petrodollars wisely. The once booming hotels are nearly empty. They have stopped payment on their foreign debts to international banks by citing Shariah (Muslim) law which forbids interest on loans. Thus, the once rich-spender Saudis are now in trouble with foreign bankers. • The **United Arab Emirates Arabs** used to be pirates. This area of the Persian Gulf was notorious for piracy. They preyed on trade between Europe and China. The British came in 1806 to impose order against the Arab pirates. In 1853 piracy was finally wiped out. Thus, the Pirate Coast became the respectable Trucial States. From a tribal group of pirates, seafarers and desert nomads, the UAE Arabs have become affluent. The most outstanding examples of ill-conceived investments in the Arab world are found in the UAE. Ports and so-called international airports stand cheek to cheek. Every member in the UAE has an international airport of its own, making cynics joke that the state boundaries end where the next runway begins. Dubai is the nerve center for smuggling Western currency, gold and other goods and is the outlet for capital fleeing Afghanistan and Iran. • In some cultures like **Japan**, it is wrongly regarded that suicide can be honorable. Geisha girls from Japan worked as bar girls and prostitutes in the Philippines at the turn of the century. Until WW II, Filipinos had more money and hired Japanese as gardeners, farmers and duck raisers. • Indian religious art may be the earliest examples of pornography. • The **United States**, by deserting its ally South Vietnam in the darkest hour of its need, has lost face. The tall, rich but decadent Americans had lost to the small, poor but determined Asians. • Until today, the Buddhist majority in Sri Lanka still have a 2,000 year old nightmare that the goal of the Tamil minority is to drive them into the sea. • Other religions of lesser stature: Judaism, Shinto, Confucianism, Taoism and Zoroastrianism. • The demonstration at Tiananmen Square was inspired by the People Power Revolution in the Philippines in 1986 but the Chinese did not have the Christian spirit behind them so they failed. The Timorese were not converted to the major religions of Islam and Hinduism but they were converted to Christianity. Ngo Dinh Diem's corrupt relatives and Catholic religion antagonized his own people. • King Sihanouk of **Cambodia** abdicated the throne in favor of his father. When he was asked why he gave up the throne, he said: "Kings are shot at but not princes." The new Cambodian king, Norodom Sihamoni, a former ballet dancer, is not married. • Prajadhipok abdicated the throne in 1935. His nephew Ananda Mahidol succeeded him but died in 1946 of a mysterious bullet wound. His younger brother ascended the throne and became the present king of **Thailand**, Bhumibol Adulyadej. Thais are amiable, happy, small. During WW II, Thailand cooperated with Japan, allowing Japanese forces to pass through on their way to conquer British Malaya and Singapore. • **Jordan's** King Hussein, like Henry VIII of England, was a connoisseur of beautiful women. He married and divorced several wives, which is allowed in Islam. • Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah has two wives in **Brunei** and a reputation for lavish spending. • A political feud has erupted in the Bhutto family. Benazir, the prime minister of **Pakistan**, is quarreling with her mother Nusrat.

. . . . . AS YOU LOVE YOURSELF (WAY TOO MUCH)

• The **Philippines** has always been "the light of Asia." Filipinos will be used by the Lord to bring Christianity to the vast millions of China. Filipinos are destined to be the missionaries and apostles for the end times. At least 3 billion people in Asia have yet to hear about Jesus, the Son of God. • **Rizal** is considered as "The Greatest Man of the Malay Race." He inspired the Japanese to aspire for their own freedom. • France succeeded in carving out a colonial empire in Asia with the help of the Filipinos. The Philippines helped East Timor become the newest independent nation. Filipino guerilla tactics were later copied by other Asian revolutionists like Mao Zedong and Ho Chi Minh. • Former Philippine islands in the South Pacific include Guam, the Marianas, the Caroline Islands and Palau. • The colored peoples of Asia have suddenly become adventurous and confident while the Westerners have become insecure, decadent, corrupt and hardened.

TRUE, GOOD AND BEAUTIFUL FACTS TO MEMORIZE AND REMEMBER

• Although Portuguese explorers and traders were the first to reach the Philippines (a Y-shaped archipelago), it was a Spanish expedition led by Magellan who first came to the islands in 1521. • Hirohito was really a wise emperor. It was he who decided that Japan should end the war and surrender after the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. • The platypus lives on ants, which it catches with its long nose and sticky tongue. Its body is covered with sharp spines. The duck mole resembles a rat but has a wide nose like a duck. • In the 12th century BC, a tribe of Koreans from the area near Beijing, China moved to Korea and established a new country (Korea). Descendants of these tribal Koreans still live in China today. • The word "meridian" sounds like a soft drink. • The Philippine Revolution in 1896 was supported by the Japanese. • Brunei used to be the world's main producer of chewing gum until the introduction of synthetic gum in the 1930s. • Because of the collapse of communism in Vietnam, many Vietnamese today have accepted Christianity despite the censorship on religion by the government. Bangladesh (90% Muslim) is now experiencing a Christian revival. South Koreans have the largest Christian churches in the world. • Today, Lebanon is in the midst of the worst civil war in the world and is living on borrowed time and international charity. Today, the oil-rich Gulf States are threatened by the escalating Iran-Iraq War. • The Christians who cursed and persecuted the Jews came to a disastrous end, e.g. Hitler and the Nazis who killed 6 million Jews during WW II. Christians who helped the Jews were blessed, e.g. the Americans who supported Israel. • APEC is best known as the annual meeting when heads of states dress up in the native costumes of their host nation and pose for a group picture. • Thunderstorms are so frequent in Bhutan that it is known as "The Land of Thunder Dragons." • The Jews in Israel cradled two major religions — Judaism and Christianity. Jews wrote all the books of the Bible, a holy book of both Judaism and Christianity. • The overcrowding of people has caused such disasters as floods, droughts and famine. • 3 million dead and 6 million Afghan refugees fled to Pakistan. • Yak, native goat of Tibet.

(UTTERLY) LOST IN TRANSLATION

• Rome became the mistress of the Western World (ang Roma ay naging Kerida ng Kanluraning Daigdig). Brown bear (kayumangging oso). Berlin-Rome-Tokyo Axis (Ehe ng Berlin-Roma-Tokyo). Heavy rains (mabigat na patak ng ulan). Boat people (mga taong nasa bangka; bangkang-tao). Chewing gum (tsuwing gam). Yellow race (taong madidilaw). Pearl fishing (pangingisda ng perlas). Buddha the Enlightened One (ang Naliwanagang Isa). The body of the platypus is covered with sharp spines (Ang katawan nito ay nababalutan ng matutulis na pako). Korea was called "Chosun" (Ang Korea ay tinawag na "Piruli"). Cold chills (malalamig na ginaw). Offshore oil (langis na nasa pampang). Upland coffee (kape ng kataasan). Ghetto (sapilitang slum). Crown prince (prinsipeng pangkorona). Half-brother (kapatid sa isang magulang). Showcase of democracy (iskaparate ng demokrasya). Writing brush (escoba sa pagsusulat). Chivalry (kagalantihan). Blackmail the government (kuwaltahan ang pamahalaan). Cream of society (Krim ng lipunan). Top man (pinakamataas na lalaki). Coup d'etat (pagtapon sa pamahalaan). Miracle rice (makahimalang bigas). Pearl Harbor (Daungang Pearl). Great Wall of China (Dakilang Pader). Inner Mongolia (Panloob na Mongolia). Broke with tradition (bumakli ng tradisyon). Bustling megapolis (nagmamadaling megapolis). Minor prophet (maliit na propeta). Crony (kaloto). Lifted martial law (itinaas o inangat ang batas militar). Ceylon's Adam's Peak (Tuktok ni Adan). Young gunman (batang asintado). Converted the tribe (kinumberte ang tribo). Relative by marriage (kamag-anak sa kasal). Umayyad Caliphate (Kalipayt ni Umayyad). Finest woolen wear (pinakamalinaw na kasuutang lana). The gentle Gandhi (maamong si Gandhi). Refugee camp (kampong takas). Simultaneous attack (sabayang atakihan). Polished diamond (pinakintab na brilyante). The British knighted his son (kinabalyero ng Britanya ang kanyang anak). Military hardware (hardwer militar). Scud missile (iskad misil). Missile rocket (misayl na raket). Israeli [e] (dyet Israeli). Treat them kindly (tratuhin nang maibigin). Cassette (kaset). Army (armi). Appliance (aplayans). Party (parti). The people have mixed blood (may dugong halo). Cotton mill (gilingan ng bulak). **Water mill (gilingan ng tubig). Brain drain (pagka-ubos ng isip.)**

199 Sauyo Road, Novaliches, Quezon City 1116
Email : sickbooks_togo@yahoo.com

ADVT

TAIWAN SCHOOLS
The landslide-affected town of San Francisco, Southern Leyte, is the recipient of two school buildings donated by Taiwan. At the capsule-laying rite were Taiwan's Ambassador to the Philippines Hsin-Hsing Wu (2nd from right), Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla (3rd from right), Southern Leyte Gov. Rosette Lerias (4th from left) and Petron Corp. president Nicasio Alcantara (2nd from left).

DepEd defends sex ed

By Alcuin Papa

THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION is not pushing premarital sex in the public schools with lessons on the use of condoms and other contraceptives.

DepEd Officer in Charge Fe Hidalgo said the aim of the lessons is to inform the students of the responsibilities and consequences of engaging in premarital sex.

"It is not true that we tolerate sex outside of marriage. Government does not encourage that and we are trying to teach students to say no (to premarital sex)," Hidalgo told the INQUIRER.

Recently, Dr. Angelita Aguirre, head of Human Life International, an attached organization of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines-Episcopal Commission on Family and Life (CBCP-ECFL), wrote Hidalgo about a high school teaching module that Aguirre said promoted premarital sex. She said she found the inclusion of sex education in the public school curriculum "disturbing."

"The teaching guide in the hands of teachers is there to help them give the correct information to the students. I have gone through the material myself," Hidalgo said.

She said that based on studies that showed that the youth were getting more involved in sexual activities, the DepEd saw fit to educate them about sex.

"We felt that because of the statistics and surveys, we should respond to that. This is all about adolescent reproductive health and we felt that we should inform the students of the consequences so they could be responsible for their actions. There is nothing there that says it's okay. We agree that, ideally, it's the parents who should be explaining these things to [their children], but we think it should be a collaborative effort," Hidalgo said.

In her letter to Hidalgo, Aguirre said the teaching module was devoid of "full disclosure and truth telling" because it failed, for example, to inform the students that using a condom did not guarantee 100-percent protection from sexually transmitted diseases.

The module is set to be distributed to teachers this month.

Aguirre said the module could give the students the wrong impression that it is all right to engage in premarital sex.

She said that if anyone should be teaching the students about sex, it should be their parents.

More madrasah classes slated

MUSLIM CHILDREN WILL HAVE MORE opportunities to study under the madrasah system as the Department of Education is set to offer more madrasah classes in the public schools this school year.

For the second year, the DepEd is offering madrasah classes to more than 1,800 elementary school students in the National Capital Region, said DepEd Officer in Charge Fe Hidalgo in a statement.

"The education of our Muslim children is an important concern of our President. Our government is very much committed to ensuring a bright future for our Muslim children," Hidalgo said.

"The madrasah classes will actually serve both Muslims and non-Muslims. The objective is to make Muslims feel they are truly part of this country and that they are not prohibited from practicing their own religion. For non-Muslims, this can be the basis of their understanding of the Muslim culture."

Aside from basic subjects like English, Math, Filipino, Makabayan and Science, madrasah classes will teach the Arabic language and Islamic values, she said.

This year's madrasah program kicked off last Saturday morning at the Commonwealth Elementary School in Quezon City.

In attendance were Hidalgo, DepEd Undersecretary for Muslim Affairs Manaros Boransing, Presidential Assistant for Education Antonio Inocentes, DepEd NCR Director Teresita Domalanta and Dr. Gamal N. Ahmed, representative of the World Islamic Call Society of Libya (WICS).

The WICS has committed to support the printing of madrasah books, specifically on the Arabic language and Islamic values, from grade 1 to high school. The printing of the books will be done over a 10-year period and will cost around P500 million, Boransing told the INQUIRER.

"The curriculum of the classes will be geared toward building peace and understanding among our people," Boransing said.

Alcuin Papa

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, June 12, 2006
10th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: 1 K 17:1-6
Gospel: Matthew 5:1-12

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain. He sat down and his disciples gathered around him. Then he spoke and began to teach them:

Fortunate are those who are poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Fortunate are those who mourn, they shall be comforted.

Fortunate are the gentle, they shall possess the land.

Fortunate are those who hunger and thirst for justice, for they shall be satisfied.

Fortunate are the merciful, for they shall find mercy.

Fortunate are those with a pure heart, for they shall see God.

Fortunate are those who work for peace, they shall be called children of God.

Fortunate are those who are persecuted for the cause of justice, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Fortunate are you, when people insult you and persecute you and speak all kinds of evil against you because you are my followers. Be glad and joyful, for a great reward is kept for you in God. This is how this people persecuted the prophets who lived before you.

Commentary

As we begin our ordinary grace-filled lives, expressing worship and belief publicly, we are given the foundations of what we are to become and practice as communities of Jesus: first, obedience (Elijah, the story of the power of the Word in weather, lives and history). And we learn the marks of a Christed one: poor, lowly (nonviolent), hungry and thirsty for justice/holiness; merciful, single-hearted, a peacemaker; and at times if we do these things well, we become persecuted for holiness' sake. And always we are to rejoice and be prophets of the truth, the Word of God to the world (in the tradition of Elijah, Jesus and those who have gone before us in faith).

Claretian Publications Inc., 8 Mayumi St., UP Village, Diliman, Quezon City, UP P.O. Box 4, Diliman, 1101 Quezon City; Tel.: 921-3984; Fax: 921-7429; E-mail: cci@claret.org; Websites: http://www.bible.claret.org (Claretian Publications Inc.) & http://missionaries.claret.org (Claretians in the Philippines)

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"Mobile Innovation Awards 2005"
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Somebody out to sabotage PCGG, says Abcede

By Alcuin Papa

A TOP OFFICIAL OF THE PRESIdential Commission on Good Government (PCGG) yesterday said he suspected that an individual or group of individuals was out to sabotage the work of the PCGG following reports of the alleged changing of guard at the commission.

PCGG Commissioner Ricardo Abcede said this was borne out by a recent report claiming Malacañang had designated him acting PCGG chair vice Camilo Sabio. The Palace later denied Sabio had been replaced.

"Someone, or maybe a group, might be out to disrupt our work in the PCGG. Maybe they also want to distract us from our work," Abcede said.

On Thursday, reporters covering the PCGG received through a fax from an unknown source an alleged order from Malacañang designating Abcede as Sabio's replacement.

Abcede speculated that the issue was meant "to drive a wedge between me and chairman Sabio."

"After all, there are people who are willing to go out of their way to do all of these things," the outspoken Abcede said.

He said the PCGG had examined the alleged order from the Palace and concluded that it was fake because the seal of the President on the document was not authentic.

"While we are still looking into the incident, it would be better for us not to make too much out of it," Abcede said. "These disruptions are just only that. They will not affect me and the other commissioners from doing their work."

He surmised that the incident could have been prompted by PCGG's negotiations with the Marcoses and on the coco levy funds, as well as the ongoing controversy at the Philippine Communications Satellite Corp. (Philcomsat). "It could be these three issues. But this is just within the realm of possibilities. The PCGG is handling so many cases."

Sabio recently spearheaded the negotiations for a deal over the coco levy funds, estimated at around P100 billion, with businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco.

Abcede is also pursuing a compromise with the Marcoses on the family's alleged ill-gotten wealth estimated at $5 to $10 billion.

He was roundly criticized by former Senate President and PCGG Chair Jovito Salonga and human rights victims during martial law for pursuing a deal with the Marcoses.

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Justice
Bureau of Corrections
Davao Prison and Penal Farm
Davao del Norte

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Davao Prison and Penal Farm, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites prospective bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project	:	Food Catering Services
Location	:	Davao Prison and Penal Farm, B.E. Dujali, Davao del Norte
Brief Description	:	Food catering to 4,038 inmates confined in the Davao Prison and Penal Farm plus 10% projected increase in inmates population (403 inmates) during the period or a total of 4,441 inmates
Approved Budget	:	32,685,760.00 (4,441 inmates x 184 days x P40.00/day per inmate
Contract Duration	:	184 days (six (6) months) upon approval of the Memorandum of Agreement

The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted. All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities, as follows:

	Activities	Schedule	Venue
1.	Issuance of Bid Documents	June 13, 2006	DPPF Supply Office
2.	Pre-bid Conference	June 20, 2006, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.	DPPF Social Hall
3.	Submission of Bid Documents	July 4, 2006, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.	– do –
4.	Opening of Bids & Evaluation	July 4, 2006, 1:30 p.m. Onwards	– do –

Bid documents may be obtained at the BAC Secretariat, DPPF, Davao del Norte, only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Two Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (P 2,500.00) to the DPPF Cashier.

The DPPF reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defects or informality therein without assuming any obligation whatsoever, or to accept proposal most advantageous to the government and assumes no responsibility to compensate or indemnify to any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

(Sgd.) ENGR. RUFINO A. MARTIN
Chairman BAC

(Sgd.) GERARDO F. PADILLA
Chairman TWG

Approved:

(Sgd.) CATALINO A. MALINAO
Penal Superintendent I

(PDI – June 12 & 19, 2006)

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

Republic of the Philippines

6CB-GSC-047

PURCHASE OF VARIOUS VEHICLES
(Name of Project)

4 Items of Various Vehicle (pls. see also details @ www.gensantos.gov.ph)

The **Local Government Unit of General Santos City**, through the CY 2006 Annual Budget intends to apply the sum of **Two Million Five Hundred Seventy Thousand Pesos (P2,570,000.00)** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the Purchase of Various Vehicle. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid Opening.

The **Local Government Unit of General Santos City** now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the Purchase of Various Vehicle. Delivery of the GOODS is required by **30 calendar days.** The description of an eligible bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents ITB.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsive of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.

Interested Eligible Bidders may obtain further information from the **Local Government Unit of General Santos City** and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Bidders that passed the eligibility check upon the presentation of the Notice of Eligibility to the BAC Secretariat, at the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of **P1,000.00** to the City Treasure's Office. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the bidder or his authorized representative.

The **Local Government of Unit of General Santos** will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested on **June 15, 2006, 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon at the BAC Office, 2nd Floor, Right Wing, City Hall Building, General Santos City.**

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or **before 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon of June 27, 2006**. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form of Cash, Certified Check, Cashier's Check, Manager's Check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit equivalent to One Percent (1%) of ABC or Bank Guarantee equivalent to One and a Half Percent (1½%) of ABC or Surety Bond equivalent to Two and a half Percent (2½%) of ABC or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

Bid opening shall be on **2:00 o'clock in the afternoon of June 27, 2006 at the BAC Office, 2nd Floor, Right Wing, City Hall Building, General Santos City** Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.

The **Local Government Unit of General Santos City** reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Bids and Awards Committee
Gina Y. Pigar
2nd Floor, Right Wing, City Hall Building, General Santos City
Tel. Nos. (083) 301-0553, (083) 302-7210
Fax: (083) 301-0553
website address:www.gensantos.gov.ph

(Sgd.) NAEL JOSEPH D. CRUSPERO
BAC Chairman

(PDI – June 5 & 12, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
PHILIPPINE HEALTH INSURANCE CORPORATION
Citystate Centre, 709 Shaw Boulevard, Pasig City
Healthline 637-9999 *www.philhealth.gov.ph*

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
No. 2006-012-g

BIDDING FOR THE PROCUREMENT OF ME-5 REMITTANCE FORMS FOR THE EMPLOYED SECTOR

The **Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth)**, through the Corporate Operating Budget (COB) 2006 intends to apply the sum of **Php 2,412,500.00** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the Procurement of ME-5 Remittance Forms for the Employed Sector. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

PhilHealth now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the said procurement with the following specifications:

JOB TITLE	:	ME-5 Remittance Forms for the Employed Sector
QUANTITY	:	50,000 pads (10,000,000 sheets) (50 sets per pad @ 4 copies per set)
SIZE	:	Width : 7.75 inches Length : 5 inches
MATERIAL	:	"Quality" Colored Carbon-less Paper Impression must be clear up to the last ply 1st Ply - White Carbon-less paper 2nd Ply - Yellow Carbon-less paper 3rd Ply - Green Carbon-less paper 4th Ply - Pink Carbon-less paper Wrapping Paper Cover Chipboard Back Cover
PROCESS	:	Offset Printing / Red Gum Padded Back to back printing on all copies
Serial Numbers	:	Pre-numbered (9 digits) All Numeric (Crash Numbering) 50,000 pads
Packaging	:	50 pads per corrugated box Serial numbers must be posted on two (2) opposite sides of the box.

Delivery :

Schedule of Delivery	ME-5 Sets	ME-5 Series Nos. (From - To)	Delivery Date
1st	18,000	213237501 - 214137500	15 days after notice to proceed
2nd	16,000	214137501 - 214937500	15 days after the first delivery
3rd	16,000	214937501 - 215737500	15 days after the second delivery

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the "Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino Citizens/Sole Proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino Citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 and subject to Commonwealth Act 138. Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to the technical and financial requirements. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who would be determined as such after the post-qualification procedure.

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the **Office of the Secretariat for the Bids and Awards Committees (OSBAC)** in the Central Office of PhilHealth, Room 1107 11th floor Citystate Centre, 709 Shaw Blvd., Pasig City, and inspect the Bidding Documents from **8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

A complete set of Bidding Documents should be purchased by interested Bidders from June 12 - 29, 2006 at the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of **P3,000.00** cash. The prospective Bidder or his authorized representative shall receive the Bidding Documents personally.

PhilHealth will hold a **Pre-Bid Conference** open to all interested parties on **June 30, 2006 at 10:30 a.m.** at the **OSBAC Conference Room** (Rm. 1106), PhilHealth Central Office, 11th floor Citystate Centre, 709 Shaw Blvd., Pasig City.

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the **OSBAC Conference Room on or before July 14, 2006, 10:30 a.m.** The official time shall be based on the wall clock located at the **OSBAC Conference Room.** Late Bids shall not be accepted.

Bid opening shall be on July 14, 2006, 10:30 a.m., at the **OSBAC Conference Room.** Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend.

CY 2004 to CY 2005 is the relevant period for contracts which will be required to be submitted by PhilHealth.

PhilHealth reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Office of the Secretariat for the Bids and Awards Committees in the Central Office
MR. JOSEPH O. VERGARA
Rm. 1107, 11th Floor Citystate Centre, 709 Shaw Blvd., Pasig City
Tel. (02) 637-9999 locals 1128, 1130 and 1830
e-mail add: osbac@philhealth.gov.ph
Facsimile No. 637-4735
www.philhealth.gov.ph

(Sgd.) ATTY. VALENTIN C. GUANIO
Chairperson, Bids and Awards Committee for Goods and Services

(PDI–June 12 & 19, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
10th Flr., A. Francisco Gold Condominium II, EDSA corner Mapagmahal Street, Quezon City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

June 5, 2006

1. The Government of the Philippines (GOP), through the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), has received an ODA Loan from Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) in the amount of FOUR HUNDRED EIGHTY FIVE AND FIFTY TWO MILLION JAPANESE YEN (¥485.52 million) toward the cost of the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project, Phase V (RWSSP V), Loan Agreement No. PH-P201, dated December 28, 1999, and intends to apply a portion of the proceeds of the loan to payments under the contract for which this Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid is issued. Disbursement of the ODA Loan by JBIC will be subject, in all respects, to the terms and conditions of the Loan Agreement, including the disbursement procedures and the "Guidelines for Procurement under JBIC ODA Loans". No party, other than the GOP, shall derive any right from the Loan Agreement or have any claim to loan proceeds. The above Loan Agreement will cover only a part of the project cost. As to the remaining portion, the GOP and the concerned Provincial Local Government Unit (LGU) will take appropriate measures for finance.
2. JBIC requires that the bidders and contractors, as well as the GOP and the Provincial LGU, under contracts funded with JBIC ODA Loans and other Japanese ODA, observe the highest standard of ethics during the procurement and execution of such contracts. In pursuance of this policy, JBIC:
   (a) will reject a proposal for award if it determines that the bidder recommended for award has engaged in corrupt and fraudulent practices in competing for the contract in question;
   (b) will recognize a contractor as ineligible, for a period determined by JBIC, to be awarded a contract funded with JBIC ODA Loans if at any given time, it is determined that the contractor has engaged in corrupt or fraudulent practices in competing for, or in executing, another contract funded with JBIC ODA Loans or other Japanese ODA.
3. The Provincial LGU of the Province of Ilocos Sur, hereinafter the "Employer", invites all interested Contractors, including voluntarily formed joint ventures, from all countries and areas to submit Expression of Interest for Eligibility Processing. Local Contractors shall be holders of Philippine Contractor's Accreditation Board (PCAB) License and Certificate of Registration and Classification of Contractors as Medium B for Water Supply. Foreign Contractors must be licensed and certified by their Embassy/Consulate in the country as a bonafide Contractor. If found Eligible, the Contractor must bid for the following:
   Drilling/Construction of water supply projects, consisting of 24 units deep well, 7 units shallow well, and installation of iron removal facilities as applicable, and 8 units of school toilet and 1 unit of public toilet; all as one contract package.
   Contract duration is 210 calendar days.
4. Further information and the form for Expression of Interest for Eligibility Processing can be acquired, for free, from the Office of the Provincial Governor, Province of Ilocos Sur, Attention: the Chairman of BAC, Provincial Capitol, Vigan City, upon presentation of a written request from June 5, 2006 to June 27, 2006
5. The deadline for submission of Expression of Interest for Eligibility Processing shall not be later than 5:00 P.M., June 27, 2006, the same to be submitted either by registered mail, courier or hand -carried, in a sealed envelope duly labeled "Expression of Interest for Eligibility Processing RWWSP V", to the Provincial Governor, Province of Ilocos Sur, Attention: the Chairman, BAC, Provincial Capitol, Vigan City.
6. It is expected that the Provincial LGU, the Employer, will issue only to Eligible Applicants the Certificate of Eligibility on or about July 12, 2006, wherein the schedule of issuance of Bid Documents and submission and opening of bids will be announced. Bid Documents will only be issued to Eligible Applicant upon presentation of the original copy of the Certificate of Eligibility and upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P2,500.00
7. An applicant, and if found Eligible, a bidder (including all members of a joint venture) shall not be one of the following:
   (a) A firm or an organization which has been engaged by the DILG/Employer to provide consulting/NGO services for the preparation related to procurement for or implementation of this project;
   (b) Any association/affiliation (inclusive of parent firm) of a firm or an organization mentioned in subparagraph (a) above; or
   (c) A firm or organization who lend, or temporarily second their personnel to firms or organizations which are engaged in consulting/NGO services for the preparation related to procurement for or implementation of the project, if the personnel would be involved in any capacity on the same project.
8. The Eligibility of the Applicants will be evaluated based on the submission of Legal documents, Technical requirements and Financial documents using non-discretionary criteria of "PASS" or "FAIL".
9. A minimum requirement for qualification is to have successfully carried out similar projects at least for within the past five (5) years.
10. The Employer shall under no circumstances be held responsible for late delivery or loss of the documents so mailed or sent through courier.
11. The Employer reserves the right to:
   (a) amend the scope and value of any contract to be bid, in which event the contract will only be bid among those bidders who meet the requirements of the contract as amended;
   (b) reject or accept any application;
   (c) cancel the Eligibility Processing and reject all Expression of Interest; and
   (d) waive any formality in the Eligibility Processing to ensure that the objectives of the Eligibility Processing are met.

   The Employer shall neither be liable for any such actions nor be under any obligation to inform the Applicant of the grounds for them.

(Sgd.) AUSTERE A. PANADERO
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI June 5 & 12, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
ZAMBOANGA CITY WATER DISTRICT
Pilar St., Zamboanga City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The **Zamboanga City Water District**, through its Bids and Awards Committee II (BAC II), invites Gasoline Stations to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project	**Supply of Fuel to the Zamboanga City District East and West Section for a period of One (1) year.**
Location	**Zamboanga City**
Brief Description	**For the Fuel Requirement of Zamboanga City Water District for year 2006-2007**
Purchase Requisition Nos	**Lot 1: PR No. 8965 & Lot 2: PR No. 8966**
Approved Budget for the Contract	**Lot 1: ABC: P 3,023,514.50 & Lot 2: ABC: P 3,023,514.50**
Delivery Period	**For a Contract of One (1) Year**

Prospective Bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last two (2) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding, and have key personnel and equipment (owned, leased or under purchase) available for the prosecution of the project. The list of minimum equipment requirement is indicated in the Eligibility Forms. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examinations of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post Qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules & Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed as follows:

ACTIVITIES	SCHEDULE
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	June 13 to 16, 2006
2. Prebid Conference	June 19, 2006
3. Opening of Bids	June 30, 2006
4. Bid Evaluation	July 3, 2006
5. Post-Qualification	July 7, 2006
6. Notice of Award	July 10,006

Bid Documents will be available only to prospective Bidders upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of Two Thousand Pesos (P2,000.00) for each Purchase Requisition to the Zamboanga City Water District Cashier.

The Zamboanga City Water District assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

(Sgd.) ALEJO S. ROJAS, JR.
BAC II CHAIRMAN

(PDI – June 12 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
City Government of Zamboanga
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
City Hall, Zamboanga City
Tel. No. (062) 992-7763

Solicitation No. Goods 06-0605-180

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

Job-Order: Labor and Materials Thermoplastic Markings
(Name of Project)

Various Traffic Light Intersection, Various Road, Streets and Avenues et.al.
(Brief Description of GOODS)

1. The **City Government of Zamboanga** through the **General Fund 2006** intend to apply the sum of **TWO MILLION SIX HUNDRED NINETY NINE THOUSAND NINE HUNDRED SEVENTY THREE PESOS (P2,699,973.00) ONLY** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract **Job Order: Labor and Materials Thermoplastic Markings (PR No. 100-06-05-1152)** Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening
2. **The City Government of Zamboanga** now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for **Various Traffic Light Intersection, Various Road, Streets and Avenues et.al...** Delivery of the GOODS is required for **Thirty (30) working days** The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB **Prospective Bidder should have undertaken similar projects within the last five (5) years w/an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding**
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the law or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138) Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents ITB The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from **City Government of Zamboanga – Procurement, Acquisition and Award Division** and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from **8:00 am to 5:00 pm starting June 05-21, 2006.**
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of **P1,000.00.** The method of payment will be **Cash payable to the City Treasurers Office.** The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative
6. The City Government will hold a **Pre-Bid Conference** open to all interested parties on **June 08, 2006; 10:00 AM** at the **City Engineers Conference Room.**
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before **10:00 AM June 19, 2006.** All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in the form of **Check, Certified Check, Cashier's Check** or **Manager's Check** payable to the City Treasurer Bank Draft or Irrevocable Letter of Credit and in the amount of **P26,999.73 or Bank Guarantee in the amount of P40,499.60 or Surety Bond in the amount of P67,499.33** or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency Late Bids shall not be accepted.
8. Bid opening shall be on **June 19, 2006 at 10:00 AM in the City Engineers Conference Room. City Hall, Z.C.** Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders representatives who choose to attend at the address below
9. **To be delivered in the Office of the City Engineer.**
10. The City Government of Zamboanga reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Procurement, Acquisition & Award Division
Milagros W.S. Saavedra
City Hall, N.S. Valderosa St., Z.C.
Telefax. 992-7763 or 991-0562

(Sgd.) MARIO D. ARRIOLA (DVM)
BAC Chairman

(PDI - June 5 & 12 2006)

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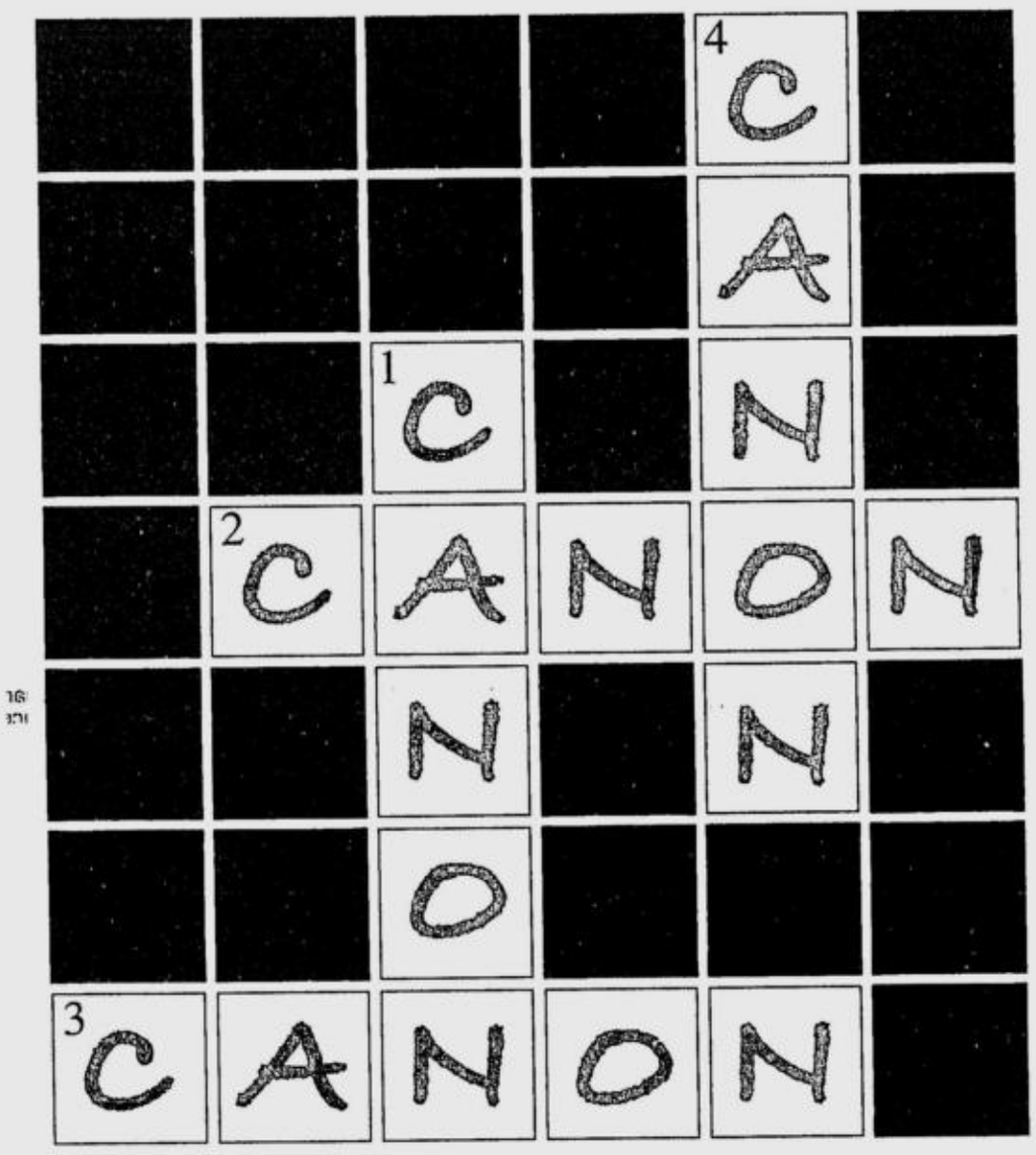

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Business *can* be simple

Stop Cha-cha, opponents cry on Freedom Day

From page A1

Rizal Monument in Manila at 8 a.m.

Simultaneous flag-raising ceremonies will be held at the Aguinaldo Shrine in Kawit, Cavite, with Vice President Noli de Castro; the Bonifacio Monument in Caloocan City with Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban; the Mausoleo de los Veteranos at the Manila North Cemetery with Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz; the Pinaglabanan Shrine in San Juan with Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr., and the Barasoain Church in Malolos, Bulacan, with Speaker Jose de Venecia.

Prayers, song-and-dance numbers and a military parade will highlight the official Independence Day celebration at the Quirino Grandstand at the Luneta.

Explosions

The celebrations come a day after two explosions rocked Metro Manila and Southern Luzon at roughly the same time. *(See story on Page A1.)*

Director Vidal Querol, Metro Manila Police chief, said there was no need to cancel the permits for the antigovernment rallies.

Querol urged the public not to worry, saying that Rizal Park was well-covered by security forces.

"We are not taking any chances. We are making very elaborate preparations to ensure meaningful celebrations," he said.

Manila has been on full alert since Friday night.

Bishops

Leading the protest rallies in Metro Manila are three Catholic bishops.

Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz and Bishops Deogracias Iñiquez of Caloocan and Julio Xavier Labayen, prelate emeritus of Infanta, have confirmed their attendance at the Liwasang Bonifacio in Manila where the protesters will converge at 4 p.m.

"I am against Charter change because of the motives of those trying to push it, not because I am against Charter change per se," Cruz said, echoing the position of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP).

"We are questioning the move, not only because of its timing, but also because of the flawed process," he said, referring to the government-backed signature campaign aimed at changing the Constitution to pave the way for a parliamentary form of government.

Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, the CBCP president, won't make it to the rally, but expressed his "solidarity" with the protesters in a letter to the CBCP secretariat.

The tearing up of copies of the proposed changes to the Constitution will be preceded by a Mass at 1 p.m. to be officiated by Labayen, Iñiguez and Bishop Antonio Tobias of Novaliches, who all belong to the Kilusang Makabansang Ekonomiya (KME).

The KME, along with the Laban ng Masa, is part of the coalition Pagkakaisa Kontra Cha-Cha at Karahasan (Pagkakaisa) which opposes Charter change (Cha-cha) and the killings of left-leaning group members and media practitioners.

Day of mourning

The group sees Cha-cha as a means of prolonging the stay of those in power, and the killings as underscoring the repression of opposition.

Wilson Fortaleza, Sanlakas president and a spokesperson for the Laban ng Masa, said Pagkakaisa had declared June 12 a national day of mourning because "as a people and a nation, we cannot even rejoice in the spirit of independence under the cloak of unstated martial rule."

In a statement, he said the people "could not speak of freedom when death squads threaten our lives, and defend sovereignty when Cha-cha wants it completely destroyed in favor of foreign control and the perpetuation of elite rule."

Laban ng Masa, the Citizens for Constitutional Convention and the Union of the Masses for Democracy and Justice, whose leaders were detained and allegedly tortured by the military two weeks ago, will join the gathering at the Bonifacio Shrine in Balintawak and the Monumento Circle in Caloocan City.

March to Liwasang Bonifacio

From Balintawak and the Monumento Circle, protesters will march to Liwasang Bonifacio in Manila to join groups such as the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan.

Before marching to Liwasang Bonifacio, militant groups under Bayan will gather at the Welcome Rotonda in Quezon City and on Taft Avenue corner Kalaw Street in Manila for simultaneous programs against Charter change from 1 p.m to 3 p.m.

"At a time when civil liberties are under siege and human rights are violated with impunity, the prospect of prolonging Ms Arroyo in power is all the more terrifying and ultimately unacceptable," Bayan secretary general Renato M. Reyes Jr. said in a statement.

The fisherfolk group Pamalakaya, which will join the protests, commended the Church leaders' participation, saying it would strengthen the "political and moral position" against moves to amend the Constitution.

"We commend the CBCP and other top religious leaders from different sects for the anti-Cha-cha prayer rally," Pamalakaya national chair Fernando Hicap said in a statement.

"The homily and divine intervention of the bishops will further strengthen the people's political and moral position against the administration's campaign to cannibalize the already mangled 1987 Constitution in the name of President Arroyo's political survival, first-rate puppetry and fetish for crimes of corruption."

Pamalakaya said it opposes Charter change on the grounds that the shift to a parliamentary system would extend the term of Ms Arroyo. The group is also against proposed economic provisions that would allow 100 percent foreign ownership of land.

After the Independence Day celebration at the Quirino Grandstand, Ms Arroyo is expected to hold her annual vin d'honneur at 10:30 a.m. in Malacañang.

The vin d'honneur would see the President hosting the diplomatic community, her officials and political leaders. *With reports from Christine O. Avendaño and Christian V. Esguerra*

Independence Day regular holiday

By Leila B. Salaverria

INDEPENDENCE DAY IS A REGULAR holiday nationwide, and those reporting for work are entitled to extra compensation, according to the Department of Labor and Employment.

The department has issued to private sector employers rules that should be observed today as the country marks its 108th year of independence, acting Labor Secretary Danilo Cruz said.

Under DOLE Memorandum Circular No. 1, employees who do not report for duty are still entitled to 100 percent of their regular salary on that day.

But if an employee comes to work, he is entitled to 200 percent of his daily salary during the first eight hours, and an additional 30 percent of the hourly rate in excess of eight hours.

However, if the day falls on an employee's rest day and he reports for work, he should get paid 200 percent of his daily rate, plus 30 percent. Should he exceed eight hours' duty, he should also be paid an additional 30 percent of the hourly rate on that day.

Those who do not have jobs could try and find one at the job fair that the DOLE will hold today at the Rizal Park in Manila from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Cruz said more than 30,000 local and overseas jobs would be made available by 135 local employers and 34 licensed overseas recruitment agencies. A total of 20,000 of the job openings are in the country.

In a statement, the DOLE said the openings for local and overseas jobs include the following positions—accounting assistants, accounting clerks, accounting service representatives, accounting staff, assembly managers, audit examiners, bank lawyers and billing coordinators;

Business managers, cadet engineers, caregivers and support workers, cashiers, child development and home therapist specialists, internal control and compliance managers, and janitors;

Marketing assistants, pantry attendants, pharmacists, physical therapists, quality assistants, sales assistants, receptions, waiters and warehouse managers.

A booth would be set up to provide online jobs and skills matching services.

The DOLE's Labor Relations Cluster will facilitate onsite legal and welfare assistance to jobseekers at Rizal Park.

Providing preemployment services are the National Bureau of Investigation, National Statistics Office, the Bureau of Internal Revenue, Social Security System, Pag-Ibig Fund and PhilHealth.

Those attending the fair are advised to bring with them their pictures (1 inch x 1 inch or 2 inches x 2 inches), clearances from the barangay, NBI or the police, employment certificates, resumés, diplomas, transcripts of records, and other pre-employment documentary requirements.

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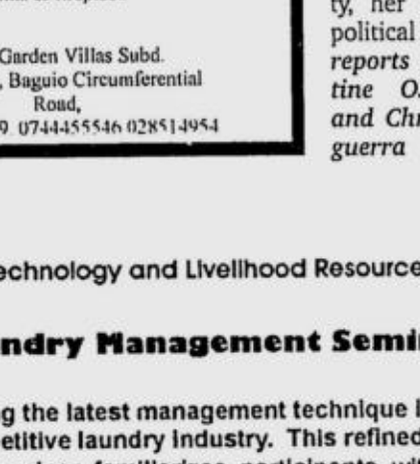
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8 injured in grenade blast at Lipa market

From page A1

It was the fourth bombing incident in 11 days to occur in two provinces of Luzon—Batangas and Pampanga—where the illegal numbers game "jueteng" has made a comeback despite police claims that they had stamped out the racket.

A ranking official recently told the INQUIRER that guerrilla or illicit jueteng operations had resumed in Batangas and that Sanchez—named in Senate hearings last year as an alleged jueteng kingpin—might have antagonized a group of outsiders trying to muscle in on what had been previously known as his turf.

Sanchez has denied any involvement in jueteng and aides said he was, in fact, at the forefront of efforts to eliminate illegal gambling in his province.

The governor narrowly survived two bombs that ripped through his Hummer SUV outside the provincial capitol on June 1.

Grenade placed in 'bayong'

Police said the victims of yesterday's blast were hit by shrapnel from an MK2 fragmentation grenade.

Senior Supt. David Quimio, Lipa police chief, said the explosion occurred at around 5 a.m. at the back of the public market, where vendors selling chickens usually set up temporary stalls on Sunday.

A police report said two unidentified men left a "buri bag" with the grenade and a fighting cock inside it hanging in the back of a parked jeepney.

The owner of the jeepney, Erwin Villegas of Sto. Tomas town, was buying goods at the time.

The explosion also damaged a tricycle.

Policemen recovered a safety lever and a hand grenade fuse from the scene.

Fighting cocks killed

The blast killed dozens of fighting cocks and chickens, Quimio said.

"There was an explosion. Then I saw two men running way," fruit vendor Eduardo Cardona told Agence France-Presse. "One was telling the other, 'There, it has gone off.'"

Cardona said he later saw one man on the ground crying for help.

The blast caused little physical damage.

Police have made no arrests and no group claimed responsibility.

"This is really an act of terrorism. If ever, (they) could be leftists or rightists. The purpose is really to sow terror," Chief Supt. Prospero Noble, head of the Southern Tagalog police, told the INQUIRER.

Police doubted the attack had anything to do with jueteng.

"*Malabo 'yan* (That's farfetched)," Noble said. "The victims are ordinary people. Why them? They have no connections. These are people just trying to earn extra (money)."

Other angles

So far, police have not seen any connection between yesterday's attack and the bombing of Sanchez's vehicle.

Noble said police had not discounted the angle that rightist or leftist forces were behind yesterday's explosion.

Asked why the attackers would choose Batangas to target, Noble had one theory:

First Lt. Lawrence San Juan, a detained rebel Magdalo soldier, was captured in Batangas and some residents must have provided authorities with information that led to his arrest. Thus, the aim of the attack might have been a message to residents to stop cooperating with the authorities.

The victims

Quimio, for his part, said the police had yet to ascertain the motive.

Police identified the victims as Dennis Carandang, Vicente Mañusca, Florendo Castillo, Orlando Magatol, Pedro Roxas, Elmer Cervantes, Arnie Tejada and Caesar Laygo.

Carandang, Mañusca, Castillo and Magatol were rushed to the Lipa Medix Hospital, while Roxas, Cervantes and Tejada were brought to the Lipa City District Hospital. Laygo is recuperating at the San Antonio General Hospital.

Tighter security

Quimio said police had invited the owner of the jeep for any information that might shed light on the incident.

Asked who might have been behind the explosion, Quimio replied: "It's really hard to make any guess. But we are certain that whoever did this were heartless and unprincipled. They injured innocent people."

Quimio said he had ordered the local police to tighten security at the Lipa central park, where the main events of the weeklong celebration of the city's founding were being held.

Bomb experts from the Philippine Air Force based at Fernando Air Base were deployed to help secure the area.

A senior police officer said there was nothing yet to show that the recent wave of bombings was coordinated.

Different types of bombs

"There is nothing (to indicate that). We are looking into it," said Deputy Director General Avelino Razon Jr.

He said different types of bombs were used on Sanchez's vehicle in Batangas and in the June 9 bombing of alleged jueteng lord Rodolfo "Bong" Pineda's house in Pampanga, as well as in the bombing of the Grepalife building in Makati.

"We are looking at them as individual cases," Razon said.

Batangas police said they were looking into the possibility that the planting of two packages initially thought to contain explosive devices at the Batangas capitol on Thursday was linked to the bomb attack against Sanchez.

A mere prank?

"We still can't say if the same suspects were involved in those incidents. Whoever placed those (fake bombs) only wanted to sow fear among the capitol employees," said Supt. Nilo Anzo, Batangas City police chief.

"But it could also have been just the handiwork of pranksters," he said in a mobile phone interview.

Police tightened security around the capitol after Air Force bomb experts found the packages inside separate garbage bins just outside the provincial council building.

Anzo said the packages did not contain any explosives after operatives of the ordnance division of the PAF detonated one of them.

He said the supposed bombs were actually glass bottles wrapped in packaging tape and metal wire.

Anonymous caller

"The initial findings of the bomb experts showed that there were no traces of bomb powder found in the package," he said.

About four hours before the discovery of the packages, an employee of the provincial council office received a phone call from an unidentified person who warned that a bomb had been planted in the building.

The bomb threat caused panic among capitol employees and the suspension of work.

Anzo also said that the explosion heard near the capitol after the packages were found "came from the disruptor which the (bomb experts) used to set off (one of the packages)."

Shadowy group

The spate of bombings and how they would affect today's Independence Day activities were the subject of an emergency meeting of top police officials in Metro Manila on Saturday, Metro Manila police chief Director Vidal Querol said.

Querol also said the police and military intelligence communities still had not identified or profiled the so-called "Taumbayan at Kawal," a shadowy group that claimed responsibility for the Grepalife and Pampanga bombings.

"So far, the intelligence community cannot yet get a profile of this claimant," he said in a phone interview. ***With reports from AFP and AP***

Soccer is the sport of the underdog

From page A1

rolling in the 2006 series.

Ideal of democracy

No other sporting event invented by man since the first Olympiad in ancient Greece has ever embodied and realized the ideal of democracy in its outcome where a less wealthy nation can triumph using the same civilized rules written in a pub by English gentlemen in 1863 and elevate itself as the equal of the richest industrial democracy.

More than any other sporting event, the World Cup provides the ground on which nations, great or small, can gain honor and pride on the sheer excellence, skills and athletic brilliance of 11 players on whose legs have rested the rise and recovery of nations devastated by two world wars in the first half of the 20th century.

The tears of joy and victory in the most intense international rivalry of modern times without shedding a drop of blood have been celebrated since 1930 in 18 World Cups held in stadiums now acclaimed as the "new cathedrals" of the modern world.

For soccer fanatics with an eye for tactics and strategy, the first few games have demonstrated the importance of tight defense in both protecting the goal and in launching offensives, without leaving the backfield open.

German victory

In the first game, Germany won in style, 4-2, against Costa Rica, a Third World country. But Costa Rica was not a pushover and exposed the weakness of the German defense whose gaps invited Costa Rican penetration.

Although Germany is not overconfident of winning the Cup, its first round victory boosted national pride. Germans celebrated with parties in Munich, raising hopes that 2006 would repeat the 1954 "Miracle of Berne," when the underdog West German team took the divided country out of the shadows of World War II by defeating Hungary in its first three World Cups titles.

World Cup 2006 has a special meaning for Germany. As host of the Cup for the first time since its reunification and as a leading economic power in Europe, the country hopes to make the event a showcase of a "new Germany."

Lack of interest in RP

It is still to early to rhapsodize over the emergence of a new generation of spectacular superstars of the likes of Maradona, Pelé and Zidane. But the hallmark of the strategy so far is the European tradition of disciplined defense over the more flamboyant Latin American-style epitomized by Argentina and Brazil.

I am not sure if Filipinos are glued on their TV sets watching the World Cup. The interest of Filipinos in soccer is no more than that of the Americans, who have never been world powers in soccer where they can dominate the rest of the world.

The aversion of Americans to soccer is blamed on their bad memory with their revolution against England where the sport was born. When the United States hosted the World Cup in 1994, it lost to Brazil. One writer was appalled by what he described as America's amazing "ignorance" of soccer.

In my high school days, we had not been hopelessly hooked to basketball. After we were dismissed from classes, most of us ran to the soccer field of the Iloilo Provincial High School, not to the basketball court. Across the road was another football field—that of the Iloilo Normal School.

In those days, we had good teams in Iloilo's Catholic colleges and football attracted Spanish mestizos. As early as the 1936 Olympics, Filipinos showed a remarkable aptitude for basketball. Over time, however, they had lost their domination of the sport in the Asian Games.

It is a marvel how Filipinos have put their eggs in one basket—in a game where they are disadvantaged by height.

Isolation of RP

When it comes to soccer, poverty and underdevelopment are not the problem. Wherever you go in Asia, Africa and Latin America, you find children playing on any cement public place available and even on paddy fields and savannahs.

The World Cup spotlights the isolation of the Philippines in a universal sporting event of only truly global reach. More than European league club tournaments, the World Cup is participated in by national teams representing national pride. Teams are not subsidized by big transnational corporations.

In World Cup 2006, only two Asian teams are competing in the final round of 32 teams—South Korea and Japan, which is weaning itself away from its addiction to baseball.

Today, Fifa has 204 members—more than 191 of the United Nations. African and Latin American countries are coming close to the Europeans in representation in the World Cup.

Full of surprises

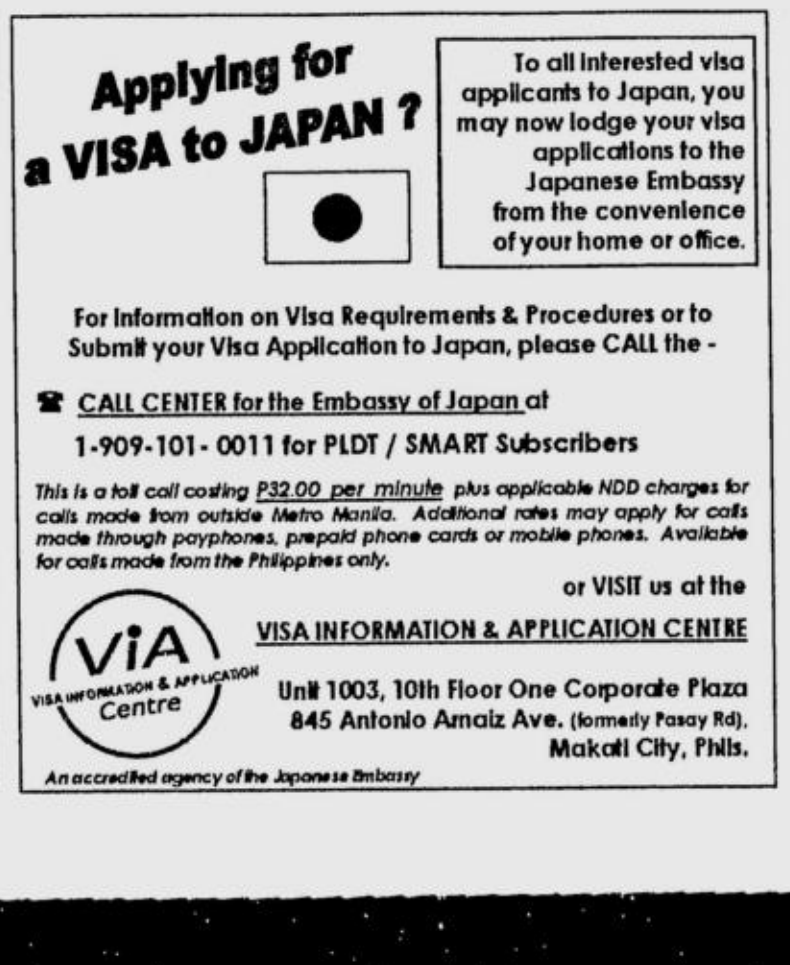
An economic analysis of World Cup tournaments suggests that they are more open to outsiders than heavy favorites. The study finds that a "Latin background clearly helps." Brazil has won five World Cups since 1930.

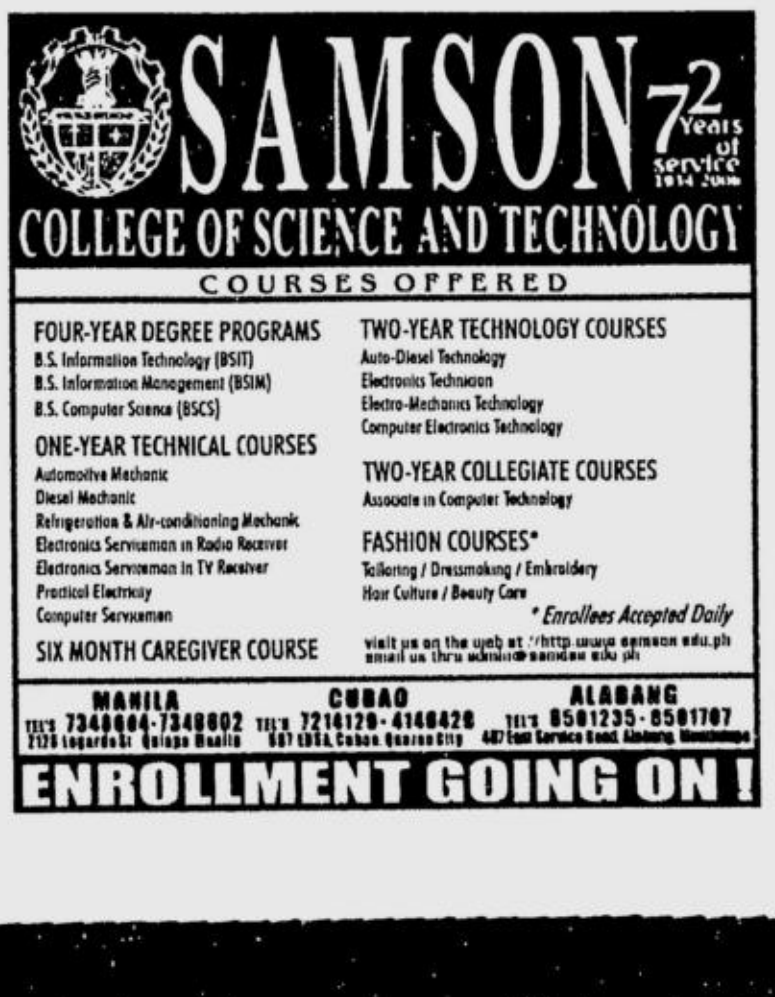
According to a study by Swiss economist Benno Torgler, a country's Fifa ranking has only a small bearing on its winning World Cup matches. "A World Cup is full of surprises and the competitive balance is much higher than those supposed," Torgler says.

As Melvyn Bragg says in his book, "football is routinely described as an art, its theatricality, its human triumphs and tragedies." Nothing illustrates this better than in the 1994 US World Cup. A Colombian defender, who accidentally scored a goal against his own team, was flown home in disgrace and was shot dead in the street by a fan.

No sporting event can be more a joy to watch and intelligent in its execution. It's the only ball game where it is directed by the feet and no none uses his hands except the goalkeeper.

A team on the offensive is like panzer division sweeping past the hinges of the Maginot Line on the Western Front, a well-oiled and coordinated human machine. It is even more awe-inspiring than the mechanism of a vintage Swiss watch.





Safety tips during eruptions

Hazards

• HIGH SPEED LAVA FLOW containing toxic gases and molten rock, which would be too fast for a person to outrun.

• Volcanic eruption clouds, liable to disperse ash over a large area (1,000 km +) and affecting the local infrastructure in various ways such as:

1. Diversions and delays in aircraft arrivals and departures

2. Delays in arrival of food supplies, crops and livestock

3. Poor visibility endangering driving

4. Blocked vehicle air filtration systems causing overheating and mechanical failure

5. Blocked drainage systems and potential for local flooding

6. Railway lines affected

7. Water supplies affected

• Health problems as a result of ash particles within the atmosphere such as:

1. Increased risk of asthma reaction

2. General respiratory and breathing problems

3. Potential for severe reaction with moisture within lungs causing a cementing affect in the lungs

4. Eye irritation

Preventive measures

• Monitor weather conditions particularly wind direction (wind changes direction with attitude)

• Have plans to evacuate to a safe area under cover

• Have clear medical evacuation plans, which may be affected by aircraft and vehicle accessibility

• Wear protective face masks and goggles

• Get regular updates from the volcanic monitoring center

• Have sufficient water, food and medical equipment supplies, when travelling and at base location (minimum 72 hours)

• Once a major eruption has been declared, have plans in place to return to a safe location and at a suitable distance

SOURCE: INTERNATIONAL NEWS SAFETY INSTITUTE (INSI)-SOUTHEAST ASIA OFFICE

Evacuation centers ready for Bulusan villagers

From page A1

"In our experience, we did not want to leave our farms because it was harvest time and whatever could be obtained could be used to pay off debts or as food stocks during the calamity," Cunanan said.

"We also placed a lot of importance on the land. It was our life. We also regarded the farms as our means to cope later with the effects of the disaster."

What would help convince farmers to leave when the situation gets worse?

Cunanan said it would help if local officials gave assurances that farm rehabilitation assistance would be undertaken after the calamity.

Farmers, for their part, could respond better to the disaster if they organized themselves right from the evacuation management phase, said Cunanan, now chair of the Pambansang Katipunan ng Makabayang Magbubukid in Central Luzon.

Local governments are more responsive to organized partners, he noted.

Follow advise of experts

Planters also have a greater chance of saving their families, farm animals and tools if they evacuate at the right time and in a systematic manner.

"Don't take a wait-and-see attitude. Follow the advice of experts at Phivolcs (Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology). Life is more important than property," he said.

Phivolcs, then headed by the late Dr. Raymundo Punongbayan and assisted by scientists from the United States Geological Survey, gave timely and correct warnings in the nine-week run-up to the strong blasts of Pinatubo in June 1991, said businessman Levy Laus of the Save San Fernando Movement.

After almost 600 years of being quiet, Pinatubo's reawakening began to be felt through earthquakes on March 15, 1991, minor explosions on April 2, continuing emissions of steam and ash, a large ash cloud on June 12 and the climactic eruptions that lasted nine hours on June 15, geologists Edward Wolfe and Richard Hoblitt said in the Phivolcs book, "Fire and Mud."

Lessons

Edgardo Chua, then chair of the Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry Inc., had worked long enough in evacuation, rescue and relief operations to learn an important lesson.

"Residents in threatened villages agree to leave when they are certain there is enough food, water, toilets and sleeping areas in the temporary shelters," Chua said. "They'd like to have some sense of order, normalcy while (in the shelters)."

He said local governments should ask the military and police to cordon off villages from looters to secure the evacuees' properties.

Even as Phivolcs declared Alert Level 2 within the 4-km radius of Bulusan, Jomar Hizon, barangay chair of Cabalantian in Bacolor town in Pampanga, said "this early, evacuation centers must be established with full facilities and support from the government."

Lahar or volcanic mudflows that strong rains washed out from the slopes of Pinatubo buried Bacolor as early as 1991 but the worst rampages came on Oct. 1, 1995.

Like in Bacolor, the threat of lahar could make the disaster linger in villages near Bulusan, he said.

Women, children and the elderly should be given priority during evacuation, local broadcaster Cecil Yumul said.

Secretary Edgardo Pamintuan, head of the Subic-Clark Alliance for Development Council and vice mayor of Angeles City during the Pinatubo eruptions, said local and national leaders should "force the people to evacuate."

"The objective is to save lives, no matter what," he said.

At the meeting with officials of local governments, Blesilda Bontigaw, officer of the Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office, called on all the barangay chairs to submit their cell phone numbers to the MDCC for emergency purposes.

Municipal health officer Salvador Isidro advised the use of facial masks at all times for residents of affected barangays and the use of wet handkerchiefs in the absence of masks.

He told residents that nebulizers would be available in designated areas for those afflicted with asthma or similar respiratory ailments.

Senior Insp. Romualdo Pesonila, Casiguran police chief, said that in case of a major eruption, trucks, jeepneys and tricyles were on standby with the police on hand to help residents leave.

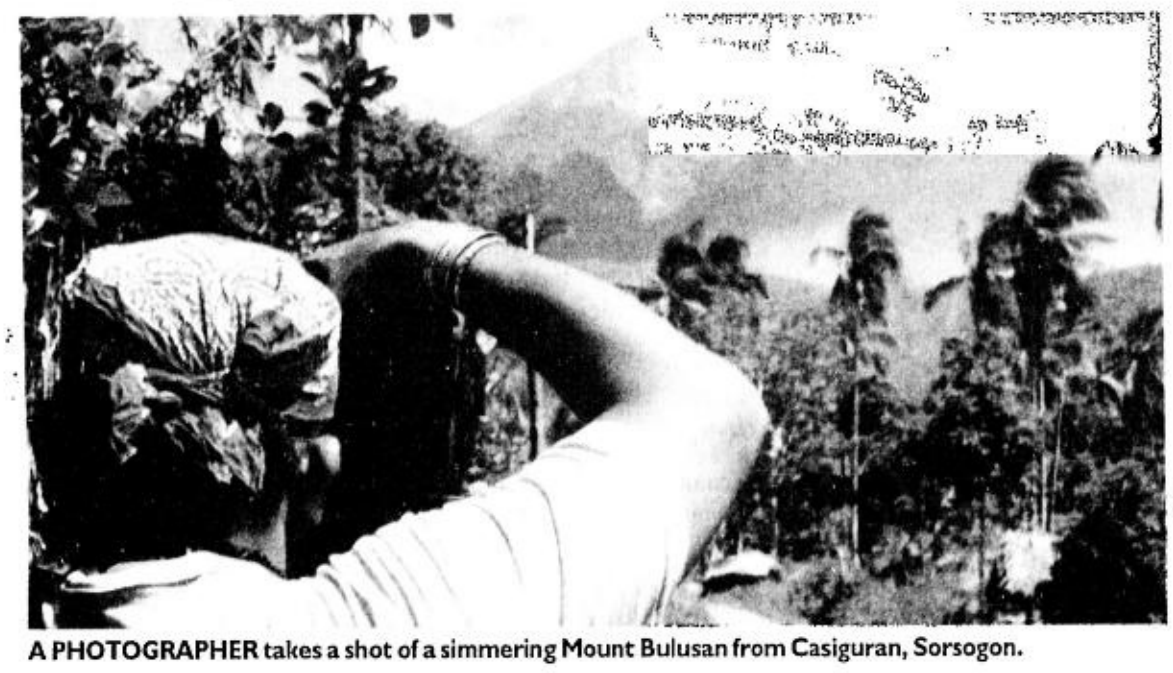
Boxes of food and medicine such as antibiotics, anti-diarrheal tablets and those for respiratory illnesses and multivitamins have also been stockpiled, according to Bontigaw.

These include 72 cases of corned beef, 12 sacks of NFA rice, 1,000 facial masks, or a total of P97,000 worth goods from the regional Department of Social Welfare and Development.

Former Agrarian Reform Secretary Roberto Pagdanganan, Philippine International Trading Corp. president, donated 11 boxes of medicines to the MDCC yesterday morning.

NIÑO JESUS ORBETA/PDI SOUTHERN LUZON BUREAU

A STEAMING Mount Bulusan does not stop a tricycle driver from plying his route in Barangay San Juan, Casiguran, Sorsogon.



A PHOTOGRAPHER takes a shot of a simmering Mount Bulusan from Casiguran, Sorsogon.

UN honors ...

From page A1

have been here only a year but had worked with other police contingents from across the globe, Zimmerman said.

Because of the presence of peacekeeping troops, including those from the Philippines, Kosovars are now enjoying a secure environment.

Cedrick Train, commander of the Philippine contingent, said his men are thankful the Unmik gave them a chance to serve. Their mission would not have been successful without the cooperation of the people of Kosovo, Train added.

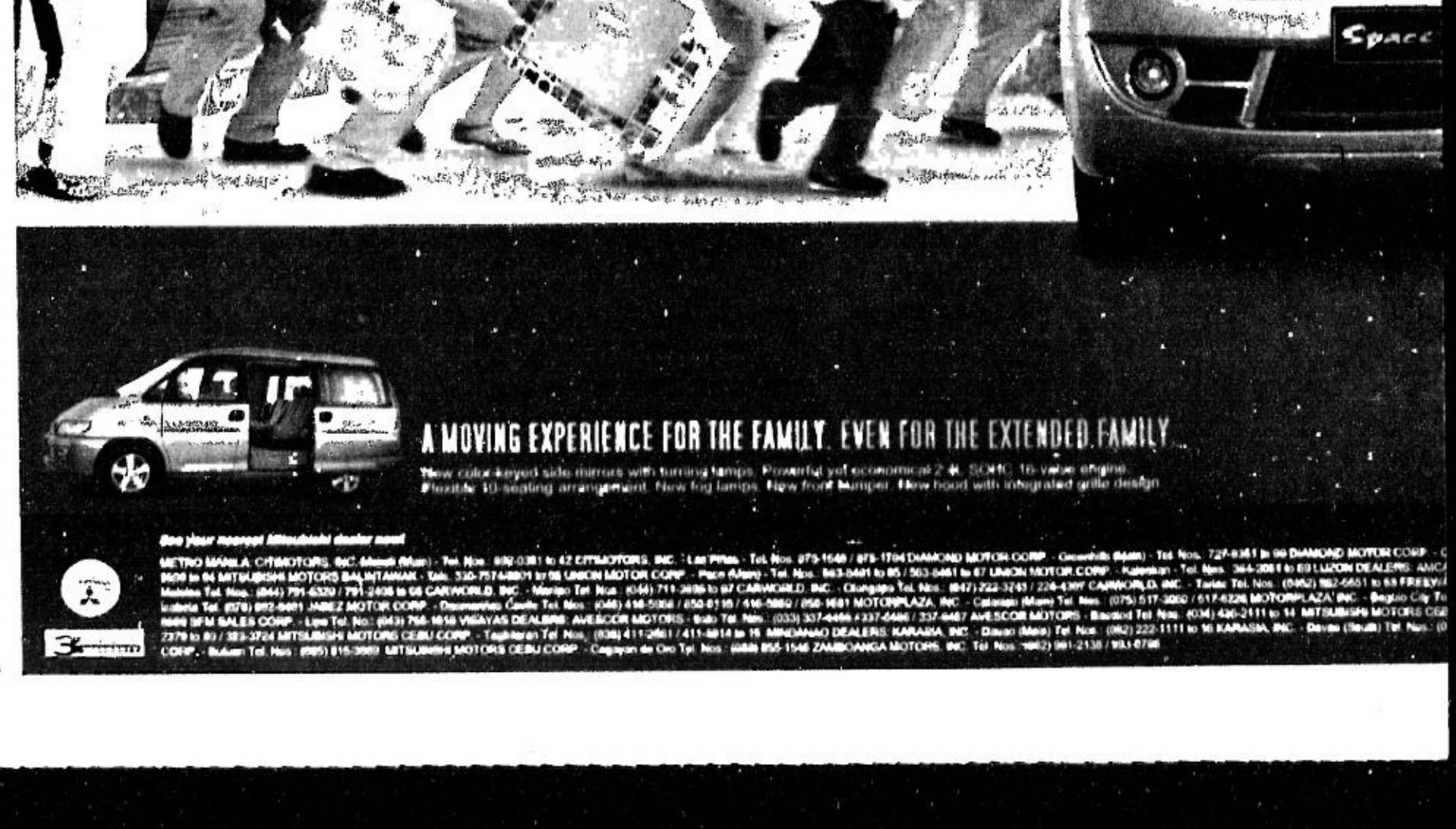
Rodolfo Tor, Philippine National Police director for plans, said that sending military and police contingents on UN missions was part of the country's commitment to the peacekeeping efforts of the world body.

"We are glad to take part in peacekeeping and peacemaking efforts," Tor said during the Philippine contingent medal parade.

He also highlighted the country's commitment to the fight against terrorism.

Aside from Kosovo, the Philippines maintains military and police peacekeeping contingents in Sudan, Afghanistan, Congo, Liberia, Haiti, Ivory Coast and East Timor.

VALENTINA Fernandez, the lone woman member of the Philippine peacekeeping contingent in Kosovo, receives the UN medal from Unmik Deputy Commissioner for Administration Hans Zimmermann. AYAN MELLEJOR



Dilangalen urges SC: Pls correct error on Erap, too

From page A1

signed from office in 2001?

Former Maguindanao Rep. Didagen "Digs" Dilangalen appealed yesterday to Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban to correct the injustice committed against Estrada in 2001 when the high tribunal ruled that the former President had "constructively resigned" from office, thus paving the way for then Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to assume the presidency.

The appeal came on the heels of Panganiban's recent admission that a judicial error might have been committed in the execution of Echegaray.

Seven years after Echegaray's death by lethal injection, the convicted rapist should not have been executed but sentenced to life imprisonment, Panganiban said in a speech he delivered recently before members of the Free Legal Assistance Group.

Dilangalen, Estrada's spokesperson, said in a statement that it was never too late for the highest tribunal to admit to a grievous error in judgment.

"Decisions by the high court are made by men and women who are not infallible, and judicial errors may be committed now and then, but it takes wisdom, courage and humility for the justices who erred to admit their mistakes," Dilangalen said.

In the case of Echegaray, the first convict to be executed after the restoration of capital punishment, the judicial error was a grievous wrong committed against him and his family.

"It's worse if a judicial error had been committed by the Supreme Court in Estrada's case. Not only would it be a wrong committed against the former President, it would be a wrong committed by the high court against 11 million Filipinos who had elected him their leader until 2004," Dilangalen said.

Not once, but three times

The Supreme Court had ruled—not once, but three times—that Ms Arroyo, not Estrada, was the country's legitimate President. The first decision was officially released on March 3, 2001. The second ruling was issued on April 3, and the third was released a week later on April 10, both also in 2001.

In all three decisions, the justices voted 13-0 to uphold the Arroyo presidency. In all three instances, then Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. and then Associate Justice Panganiban inhibited themselves from voting.

Nevertheless, Dilangalen said Estrada had been denied his right to due process in the impeachment court and in the Supreme Court.

"In the case of the ouster of President Estrada, the facts speak for themselves: Evidence before the Sandiganbayan Special Division during the plunder trial clearly showed that Estrada had not resigned and was, in fact, ousted through a conspiracy involving Ms Macapagal-Arroyo as the lead player together with a cabal of military and police generals," Dilangalen said.

Video show

On Wednesday, in his eighth appearance before the antigraft court since May, Estrada and his lawyers showed a video of Ms Arroyo, who was then Vice President, admitting that she had met with five groups of military officers who were plotting Estrada's ouster a year before it actually happened.

Dilangalen said there was also documented evidence that Estrada had merely taken a temporary leave of absence in January 2001, as shown by his official communications with two leaders of Congress, which the defense panel also presented before the antigraft court.

These official documents stating his intention to take a leave of absence and appointing Ms Arroyo as acting President on a temporary basis were ignored by the Supreme Court then headed by Davide.

Angara's diary

Instead, the high court relied heavily on a newspaper story on a diary written by a third person, Dilangalen said.

In its deliberations, the high court quoted liberally from the diary of former Executive Secretary Edgardo Angara in the last hours of the Estrada administration, which was published in the INQUIRER on Feb. 4-6, 2001.

The Supreme Court ruled that Estrada had "constructively resigned" even if he did not sign his resignation letter.

"The justices know that there is no such thing as a constructive resignation of a Philippine president in the Constitution. Then there is also the pile of incontrovertible evidence proving that President Estrada never resigned. There was clearly no vacancy in the presidency when Ms Arroyo was sworn in as president by Davide," Dilangalen said.

Due to the erroneous Supreme Court ruling, Estrada was illegally stripped of his immunity and charged with plunder in the Sandiganbayan, Dilangalen said.

Life not death sentence

In a recent speech before the Free Legal Assistance Group, Panganiban said Echegaray should not have been executed. He should have been sentenced to life in prison because Republic Act No. 7659 prescribes capital punishment for rape perpetrated by the "common-law spouse of the parent of the victim," a qualifying circumstance that was not alleged in the complaint.

Panganiban, who has consistently opposed the death penalty, said the complaint alleged that the victim was the daughter of Echegaray. However, it was proven during the trial that he was not "a father, stepfather or grandfather" of the victim.

The Supreme Court, nonetheless, affirmed his death sentence.

Echegaray was executed by lethal injection in 1999 after being convicted of raping the 10-year-old daughter of his common-law wife. *With a report from Kate Pedroso, PDI Research*

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Bill to award ₱10M to Leo's family

From page A1

apology," Pimentel said yesterday.

"That [apology] might come implicitly in the compensation. We will mandate that in behalf of the government," Pimentel said in an interview.

"This is an expression of apology. This is an act of somewhat making up for that terrible error. Though I believe that we can no longer resurrect him, at least we're trying to assuage the pain of the family by the act of awarding this certain amount," he said.

Echegaray was executed after the Supreme Court affirmed his death sentence.

"P10 million would go to his family," Pimentel said.

Pimentel's proposed bill would require a counterpart measure from the House of Representatives and would need a certification from President Macapagal-Arroyo for it to receive priority in both chambers.

Pimentel proposed compensating Echegaray's family after Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban said in a recent speech that the late house painter might have been the victim of an "erroneous execution."

Panganiban, however, said it was not proved during the trial that Echegaray was either the father or stepfather of the girl, which would have made his crime a heinous one punishable by death.

Distinctive element

Hence, Echegaray should not have been executed but merely punished with life imprisonment.

Pimentel brushed aside fears that compensating Echegaray's family would set a precedent and prompt the families of the six other convicts executed under the current death penalty law to file suit for compensation.

"There's a distinctive element in Echegaray's case that can't give rise to false claims for compensation. And that is the admission by no less than the Supreme Court that there was an error," Pimentel said.

The senator, however, said that in his bill he would encourage individuals falsely accused, charged and imprisoned to seek compensation from the Department of Justice.

Others, too

"Along with this bill is a statement that others who are similarly situated would be encouraged to seek compensation from the government, including those falsely accused and imprisoned," Pimentel said.

Panganiban's admission that there could have been a "judicial error" in the execution of Echegaray came a few days after both chambers of Congress had approved separate measures abolishing capital punishment.

A reconciled version of the measure is expected to be signed into law by Ms Arroyo.

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez told the INQUIRER yesterday that it has been shown that not even the Supreme Court was immune to committing mistakes, even one that could cost a man his life.

"I'm now more in favor of scrapping the death penalty. With this mistake, one should favor abolition," Gonzalez said in a phone interview.

Not even Church is perfect

He added: "If the choice is between saving lives and the possibility of committing a mistake, it should weigh in favor of saving lives."

"There is no court that is perfect, nor tribunal. Not even the church is perfect," Gonzalez said.

But he also said a mistake like the one that marked Echegaray's death was more of an exception.

The justice secretary also said that aside from compensation, which he was not sure the family would be entitled to, he saw no other form of redress for the family of Echegaray.

He reiterated that he did not think suing the Supreme Court for sending Echegaray to his death could be done because the court's action was done "in good faith."

"Everything has been done in good faith. I don't think it's actionable," he said.

Board of Claims

Gonzalez said he was not sure if the family would qualify for compensation.

"But it's the only thing I can think of," he said.

Gonzalez said the Echegaray family could turn to the Board of Claims under the Department of Justice, but he was not certain if they would meet the requirements set for those entitled to compensation.

Under the law creating the Board of Claims, those eligible to seek compensation are persons who were unjustly accused, convicted and imprisoned and subsequently released by virtue of a judgment of acquittal; those who were unjustly detained and released without being charged; those who were victims of arbitrary detention by the authorities, and those who were victims of a violent crime, including rape and offenses committed with malice which resulted in death or serious physical and/or psychological injuries, permanent incapacity or disability, insanity, abortion, serious trauma, or committed with torture, cruelty or barbarity.

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OPINION

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The secretary lies

IT IS A SORRY SIGN OF THE TIMES, AND A SAD reflection on the state of the nation, 108 years after independence was first proclaimed, that the headline above can be understood to refer to more than one government official serving in the present Cabinet.

It could refer to Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez, whose job description seems to include drawing public anger and opposition criticism away from the President, through the strategic use of intemperate, injudicious, inaccurate statements.

EDITORIAL

It could refer to National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales, who has demonstrated a capacity to manufacture entire conspiracies or imagine mass graves out of very thin cloth.

Unhappily, to those who find Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye a generally amiable fellow, the headline refers to him. In particular, it refers to the statement he released after a bicameral conference committee failed to conclude negotiations on the proposed 2006 national budget. The key passage reads: "We lament the nonpassage of vital reform bills to include the national budget due to the noncooperation and dilly-dallying displayed by the Senate. This situation is the clearest and best argument for a shift to a unicameral system that fuses the executive and legislative powers in one chamber for which we now have a growing momentum of public support."

In these two sentences, Bunye asserts four principal facts. On closer examination, we find that all of them are lies.

First. Malacañang does not lament the nonpassage of the 2006 budget; in fact, the Palace positively guaranteed the outcome. We are certain that the Executive would have welcomed the passage of the full trillion-peso budget for 2006; but we are even more certain that a reenacted 2005 budget also suits the President's political purposes. Hence, the late transmission of the House bill to the Senate. Hence, the all-or-nothing ultimatum from Malacañang, which was designed to stop negotiations, not encourage it.

Second. The Senate bears its share of the blame, but so does the Palace. "Both waged systematic efforts to impair each other's competitive positions via a scorched earth or creeping decapitation strategy ahead of the 2007 elections," a frustrated Rep. Joey Salceda, head of the House panel to the budget bicam, told the INQUIRER. In fact, in his frustration, Salceda finally admitted the obvious. "It's really a tricam since the Executive casts a shadow over the entire exercise." The administration-controlled House merely channels the ghosts of Malacañang. "Invariably, the House panel is a conduit of Executive intervention since we religiously adopt their budget proposal which inevitably becomes our position during the bicam." That position was "take it or leave it." In other words, the noncooperation and dilly-dallying Bunye laments can also and rightly be laid at Malacañang's door.

Third. The budget fiasco is not the clearest and best argument for a unicameral system; rather, it is the clearest and best argument **against** it. The ostensible assumption behind Bunye's "false-facts statement" is that efficiency is the best justification for a legislature; this is a point of view we can have a reasonable and profitable debate about. Bunye's real assumption, however, is that the bicameral conference was a failure because it failed to advance the President's objectives. Considering that the President's 2006 budget objectives included billions of pesos in the presidential equivalent of a pork barrel, the Senate's proposed reduction of that part of the budget was very much in the public interest—and, therefore, it was an endorsement of the check-and-balance function of a bicameral legislature.

Fourth. There is no growing momentum of public support for a unicameral system. The latest surveys from both Social Weather Stations and Pulse Asia show that most Filipinos of voting age are against a change in the system of government. The online statistics Charter change advocates point to are non-scientific, at best; manufactured, at worst. Like Bunye's brazen assertions, they are nothing more than a tissue of lies.

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GMA's creative solutions to nation's problems

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

WHEN THE VALUE OF THE PESO WAS APpreciating, Malacañang crowed: It was due to President Macapagal-Arroyo's "sound economic policies." Now that the peso value is dropping, Malacañang is so quiet, and government agencies have taken to long, convoluted, song-and-dance explanations conveniently called "global imbalance."

If for nothing else, you have to credit the Arroyo administration for being creative in solving problems.

It miraculously reduced the unemployment rate not by creating more jobs but by changing the definition of "work." Before, if you have no means of livelihood, you simply are jobless, out of work. Now, if you have given up looking for a job—because after so many months and years of trying, you still haven't found one and have run out of money for transportation—you are not considered jobless.

GMA was also creative in solving the perennial lack of classrooms. With a wave of her sharp tongue, she miraculously ended the classroom shortage not by building more classrooms but by doubling the student population per classroom. So if the ideal ratio of 45 students to a classroom in public schools will mean a shortage of classrooms, then double it to 100 students to a classroom. And presto, we'll have enough classrooms, said the President. If doubling the ratio still doesn't do it, triple it to 150 to 1 by having three sessions per day!

So journalists are being assassinated like flies? Give them guns to protect themselves. Every man for himself.

I suppose GMA has similar simplistic solutions to our nation's other problems. So the nation is being corrupted by the spread of illegal gambling like *jueteng*? Well then, legalize it. So the poor can no longer eat three square meals a day? Make them eat only once or twice a day. Many of them are doing that now—actually have been forced to do so—anyway. The population is growing too fast? Tell the military and police to kill them faster.

It's the same with the exchange rate. After boasting that the increase in the peso value was due to GMA's economic policies, the administration explained: Nothing wrong with GMA or her policies, "(the drop) was due to global imbalance."

What does that mean? Never mind, you're not supposed to understand that anyway. Just understand that it was not the fault of GMA or her policies. In the first place, she has no policies at all—except to lie, cheat, steal, bribe, suppress the truth, suppress dissent and kill anybody who threatens to unseat her from Malacañang. It is the fault of the whole world that it is "imbalanced." It is the fault of other countries that they have stronger currencies than ours.

* * *

All is not well in the Light Rail Transit Authority (LRTA). Well, the LRTA has never been well since it was built—which was many years ago during the Marcos administration. Like the Metrorail on Edsa, the LRTA has never earned a profit since it started operation. Taxpayers are paying for the annual operating losses of the two elevated rail lines.

But the problem this time is not in too little earnings; it is in too many security agencies. There are three security agencies fighting for the right to guard the LRTA lines. Remember their names: "Advance," "Variance" and "Lockheed." Some LRTA officials seem to be involved in the controversy.

(Almost all subdivisions employ security agencies, so ask a few of them and they will tell you that they sometimes give kickbacks to whoever is in charge of a subdivision's security.)

I asked an insider what the whole ruckus is about and he gave me this explanation: Advance and Variance were among several security agencies that submitted bids to handle the security services of LRTA lines 1 and 2. They were the only two bidders who pre-qualified.

The Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) recommended on Jan. 25, 2006 that the contract be awarded to Advance for having post-qualified and for submitting the lowest bid. However, LRTA Administrator Melquiades Robles ignored the recommendation and directed LRTA's corporate secretary, Honrado Cabrera, to review the BAC resolution. Cabrera, for reasons of his own, reported to Robles that Variance, and not Advance, should be awarded the contract.

Advance filed a petition for the issuance of a writ of preliminary injunction and temporary restraining order against LRTA and Variance.

In defiance of the TRO, LRTA allowed Variance to provide security at Line 2 under a so-called "provisional contract." LRTA claims this is a separate contract from the one being contested by Advance.

The court ordered LRTA and Variance to observe the status quo and restrained them from implementing the provisional contract, adding that the "provisional contract appears to be unenforceable yet considering that the same has not yet been notarized."

With the TRO, Lockheed continues to handle the security services for LRTA. Said the insider: There were patent irregularities committed by the administrator when he deliberately set aside BAC's Jan. 25 resolution which recommended that the contract be awarded to Advance. The corporate secretary, whom the administrator directed to review the recommendation, has no personality or authority to review or alter the BAC recommendations.

In an obvious effort to placate Advance, the LRTA awarded the security contract for Line 2, Area 1 (the depot) to that agency. This implies that Advance has been post-qualified to handle security services for the agency. Why then was it post-disqualified for Line 2, Area 2 if it has fully complied with all the requirements for the Line 1 contract?

Don't you think the LRT administrator showed unusual interest in preventing Advance from getting the contract and in allowing Variance to get a part of it?

Manifesto of independence

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

INDEPENDENCE DAY IS NORMALLY CELEBrated in recollection of our freedom from colonial yoke or foreign invader. I personally am glad we changed its date from July 4 (the day the United States granted independence to this country) to June 12 (the day Emilio Aguinaldo proclaimed it against Spanish rule). It affirms the idea that independence is not received like alms from a benefactor, it is asserted as a right in the face of someone who would take it away.

Independence Day need not always signify freedom from a foreign yoke, it can always signify freedom from a local one. It need not always be a rallying cry against an alien invasion, it can always be a rallying cry against a homegrown tyranny.

Today's Independence Day holds a special significance in the second respect. June 12 comes in the middle of two first anniversaries—the revelation of the "Hello Garci tape" and GMA's subsequent "lapse in judgment" apology for it. The usual suspects in Malacañang have tried to dismiss both by saying the issue has been put to rest, this country has moved on. In fact, the news of its death has been grossly exaggerated, to quote Mark Twain. It is grinding this nation to a halt.

It's time we declared our independence from it. I submit this manifesto as an articulation of principles:

THE SOURCE of our crisis today is one thing and one thing only. It is the near-universal perception of the current government as illegitimate. The surveys bear it out. Most of the citizens believe GMA cheated in the elections, most of the citizens believe GMA did not win the elections, and at least 65 percent of the citizens want GMA to go by whatever means. This government has no mandate to rule.

Governments that have no mandate to rule can rule only by one means—by force, attended by its usual handmaidens—guile, deception and outright lie. History shows so. The Spanish had no mandate, other than the self-serving one of Christianizing the heathens, and ruled the country tyrannically, holding the power of life and death over the *indio*. The Americans had no mandate, other than the self-aggrandizing one of the White Man's Burden, and ruled deviously, hiding the harshness of occupation with slogans about democracy. The Japanese had no mandate, other than the self-expanding one of Asia for Asians, and ruled with the bayonet, its efforts to pacify a restive population comparable only to the American efforts to do so when they first seized this country at the turn of the 20th century. Ferdinand Marcos had no mandate after his second presidential term, other than the self-deluding one of *tadhana*, his destiny to rule, and drove this country to ruination, from which we continue to reel today.

GMA has no mandate, other than her fantasies, and is digging the grave for this country.

The "digging the grave" is by no means a figure of speech. Over the last couple of years, and especially since the "Hello Garci" tape surfaced last year—truth has a way of coming out, as Andres Bonifacio's wife, Gregorio de Jesus, said, like the bloated bodies of the drowned—the bodies of dead journalists and activists have piled up. And it continues to pile up, notwithstanding the outcry of the community of the decent, including the international one. If the mountain of corpses is set to the torch, it will take days before the funeral pyre expires.

That is not accidental. That is the logical conclusion of an illegitimate rule. That is the culmination—or indeed but the latest development since there seems no end in sight—of a descent into dictatorship by a government that means to continue to rule without the people's consent. That is all of a piece with EO 464, which prevents government officials, military and civilian, from shedding light on the truth about the last elections. That is all of a piece with CPR, which prevents the citizens from protesting what happened in the last elections. And that is all of a piece with 1017, which prevents the people from being ruled by a ruler they voted for.

Illegitimacy breeds dictatorship as surely as a poisoned well breeds cholera. And dictatorship kills, in more ways than one.

The usurper's supporters say we should forget about the usurpation and move on. As though a people that have lost all sense of right and wrong, that can neither show pride nor self-respect, that can neither dispense nor obtain justice, can ever advance beyond a savage and brutish state. As though a nation that has lost all sense of good and bad, that has learned to live with oppression, that can abide the slaughter of the innocents, can ever move other than in the direction of a holocaust. The usurper's supporters say we should forget about the usurpation and concentrate on changing the Constitution. As though changing a perfectly legitimate Charter will ever make up for changing a completely illegitimate leader. As though a political diversion will ever make up for a moral compulsion.

There is only one thing to do in the face of this. That is to call for snap elections to end the madness. Snap elections are not just possible only if GMA resigns or is ousted. Elections—or the universal call for it—are the one thing that will make GMA resign, or be ousted. Elections are not just the crowning ceremony to come at the end of a tyranny, they are a battering ram aimed at the walls of tyranny that will cause them to fall. If this country will unite in calling for elections, the call will be mightier than the sound of Joshua's trumpets. The answer to an illegitimate rule is a legitimate rule. The answer to a leader the voters did not vote for is a leader the voters vote for. The answer to dictatorship is democracy.

Elections will make us breathe. The truth shall make us free.

Good-bye to death penalty

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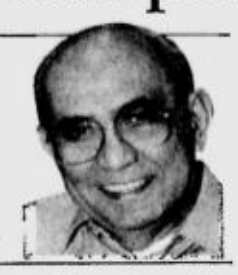

SOMETIME AGO, WHILE I WAS LISTENING TO a debate on death penalty, someone in the audience handed me a note asking me three questions: 1) Were you against the death penalty during the deliberations of the 1986 Constitutional Commission? (2) What is the view of Cardinal Sin on the death penalty? (3) Has the present Pope said anything about the death penalty?

I could only scribble an answer to the first question: yes, I was. I was not sure about the answers to the two other questions. But when I came back to the Jesuit Residence, I approached one of the in-house live "search engines" and asked him if the Pope had said anything about the matter. He was soon knocking at my door to show me a copy of the 1995 encyclical "Evangelium Vitae" (Gospel of Life), marked where the Pope dealt the subject.

The Pope discussed death penalty in the context of a state's right of self-defense. Now that Congress has acted to abolish the death penalty, it is good to recall what the Pope said:

"[L]egitimate defense can be not only a right but a grave duty for someone responsible for another's life, the common good of the family or of the State. Unfortunately it happens that the need to render the aggressor incapable of causing harm sometimes involves taking his life. In this case, the fatal outcome is attributable to the aggressor whose action brought it about, even though he may not be morally responsible because of lack of the use of reason.

"This is the context in which to place the problem of the death penalty. On this matter there is a growing tendency, both in the Church and in civil society, to demand that it be applied in a very limited way or even that it be abolished completely. The problem must be viewed in the context of a system of penal justice ever more in line with human dignity and thus, in the end, with God's plan for man and society ...

"It is clear that, for this purpose to be achieved, the nature and extent of the punishment must be carefully evaluated and decided upon, and ought not go to the extreme of executing the offender except in cases of absolute necessity: in other words, when it would not be possible otherwise to defend society."

What the Pope refers to as the growing respect for human life and human dignity is reflected in international documents which encourage the banning of the death penalty by states which have not yet done so. Our Congress has moved in this direction.

The move of Congress brings back thoughts about the movie "Dead Man Walking." Sr. Helen Prejean, the real-life nun in the movie, sometime ago, in an interview with America magazine, warned about a culture that refuses to abandon the death penalty. The thought that came to mind as I read the interview was that the campaign to put an end to executions does not end with a law abolishing the death penalty. The campaign must still be brought to the hearts of people.

Sister Prejean is not a wild-eyed activist. The technique she advocates is gentle—as gentle as the parables Jesus told by the sea. She tells stories. She explains: "One of the reasons people let the death penalty go on is that they don't identify with the condemned person. It's as if they say to themselves, 'They are not human the way we are, so it's OK to kill them.' This is what storytelling does; it brings people there and helps them realize that this person on death row is human and part of the body of Christ.

"When I share my experience about Angola, what I saw and heard and learned there, people are willing to go with me on that journey. It's like the phrase in the beginning of the First Epistle of John—what we have seen with our eyes, what we have heard—that's what can move hearts and even change people in the storytelling process. It's a witnessing, as in: I'll share with you what I saw and heard and learned."

She speaks of her audiences, the differences in their reactions. She finds poor people in inner cities, people exposed to violence and death, more receptive. She finds affluent people indifferent. With them, she says, "You have to gather the kindling, blow on the coals and get the fire going, because you've got to take them through experiences they themselves have never had. Sympathy for people on death row is the last thing that comes. If you say a man on death row was abused as a child, they'll say that there are a lot of abused kids who don't go out and murder people."

Somehow, her words ring a familiar note. It is the Thurgood Marshall hypothesis. Marshall's theory was that public support for the death penalty comes from want of information, and that if people were better informed, the public would oppose capital punishment. The "information" Marshall spoke of, however, was not just theoretical information supported by statistics. He spoke also of information that comes from feeling with real people. I had a little bit of that three weeks ago when I visited Death Row with Fr. Ray Holscher S.J., one of the chaplains, and talked with some of those who were awaiting execution.

Of course, there is also the argument that death row convicts brought death on others and must also accept death. The convict in the real-life movie "Capote" quietly accepted death. So did Jesus. But must we impose it?

The Good News says that He came that all may have life and have it more abundantly.

'Disenchanted Kingdom'

COMMENTARY

Junefe Gilig Payot
Institute on Church and Social Issues

ONE OF THE THINGS I AWAIT MOST EAGERLY at the end of each semester is the result of my students' evaluation of my performance as a part-time teacher of a course on Japanese Culture and Language. I read my evaluation report carefully because it helps me improve my teaching style, as well as the content of the course for the next semester.

Modesty aside, the comments of my students in the past four semesters have been largely positive (which, I must admit in the spirit of honesty, is another reason why I eagerly await my evaluation). But some were unflattering. In my first semester of teaching, one student commented that I had a penchant for green jokes and that I picked on students. God knows how difficult it was to stop those green jokes, but it did stop. I'm still working on the second complaint.

In the second semester of the last school year, one student complained that the course focused only on the language part when it was supposed to be a language and culture class. So last summer, my class went to Music 21 in Timog Avenue, and we sang Japanese songs; going to the karaoke is one of the favorite pastimes of the Japanese. The lyrics were all in *hiragana* (Japanese syllabary), so it was also an exercise in reading Japanese. Everyone had a blast, and they said so in the last evaluation.

Such honest evaluation is the first step toward improvement. It is indispensable. Having been a teacher herself, President Macapagal-Arroyo should know this. But one doesn't have to be a teacher to see this need. Actually, this is just practical and common sense. And this applies to anything one does, but more so when one is a public servant and most especially when one is the president of a republic.

After watching a come-backing Martina Hingis demolish her opponent in the first round of the French Open, I saw a news flash showing the President fuming over a report of acting Education Secretary Fe Hidalgo. As she paced the floor to cool herself down, GMA reminded me of the temperamental Marat Safin who lost in the first round of the tennis tournament in straight sets after losing his cool, proving once more that if you lose your cool, you lose.

When Arroyo stood up, I half-expected the obsequious male Cabinet members seated next to her to follow her and start fanning her to help her cool down, like what servants used to do to pharaohs and queens in ancient Egypt. That would have been the height of sycophancy, which seems to be one of her criteria in hiring Cabinet members. Indeed, GMA's male Cabinet members have been her most vocal defenders (flatterers).

The unlucky lady official, a veteran at the Department of Education, was castigated for supposedly exaggerating the shortage of classrooms in the country. GMA insisted that a higher student to classroom ratio (100:1) should be used and not the smaller 45:1 ratio because of the two-classes-per-classroom-per-day policy the Arroyo administration has adopted. She wanted to paint a rosy picture of the educational system because the meeting was being covered by the media. She said so herself. But Hidalgo used the lower ratio which showed we are in fact nowhere near the ideal.

For sure, many of our government officials have been glossing over the real situation in their respective sectors—agriculture, housing, environment, etc. But to see the highest ranking public official herself castigating another official for telling the truth only served to encourage such practice—to the detriment of our country and our children's sense of values.

The day after that news flash, as if in support of Hidalgo, news features on TV and print media showed how some of public schools have been coping with the shortage of classrooms. Unfortunately, in the afternoon of the outburst, the DepEd head was—to put it bluntly—forced to lie and revise her figures. What a "good example" for the incoming students. Perhaps, that's the reason why the official said she was "sorry for herself."

How can you improve the problem of classroom shortage if you do not face the problem squarely? The sad truth is that classroom shortage is not the only problem besetting our educational system. There is also the lack of books, the lack of teachers and the lack of competent teachers. And it will do the country good if the government will recognize all of these and begin to address them seriously and sincerely.

Before she tells a national gathering of employers about transforming the country into an Enchanted Kingdom, the President should first ensure that the country will produce high-quality labor force. This she can do by making sure that the government provides quality education.

A friend, who is a high school teacher, and I were discussing these issues on our way to the Quezon Memorial Circle to spend a leisurely morning (Enchanted Kingdom is too far and expensive) when we passed by a small group of young protesters in front of the Philcoa building. One of the speakers, a petite lady herself but with a sincere concern for the country, pointed out that the budget allocated for education was "*kasing-lit* ni Gloria." She can say that as well about GMA's vision for our country's educational system.

Meanwhile, you hear about Malacañang giving pork barrel funds to the congressmen who quashed the impeachment move against her last year, hoping to get their support once more in another impeachment move this year.

The only good thing that came out from that display of presidential temper is that the public now knows better to see the real picture the next time the government makes positive forecasts about the country's situation.

It's about time people got disenchanted.

Independence days

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

WE HAVE SEVERAL INDEPENDENCE DAYS, really: Aug. 23, 1896, when Andres Bonifacio led in the tearing-up of the *cedula*, the symbol of our people's subjection to Spain; June 12, 1898, when Emilio Aguinaldo proclaimed our independence to the world; Sept. 29, 1898 when representatives of large parts of Philippine territory ratified that proclamation (in modified form); and July 4, 1946, when the world finally recognized that independence. Officially, the 12th of June has been chosen as the Philippine Independence Day, though the other dates have their own advocates, too.

It seems to me that the arguments of the various sides of the never-ending debate on our "real" independence day depend on whether one's definition of both nationalism and nationhood—and sovereignty—is primarily inward- or outward-looking; and on one's views about the model for national leadership.

Bonifacio's proclamation was inwardly expressed—meaning, directed to his fellow Katipuneros, and then to the Tagalogs, Ilocanos, Kapampangans, Bicolanos, Cebuanos, Ilonggos, etc. He had hoped to convince them to identify and unite themselves as one nation, to be called either "Filipinas" or "Katagalugan."

On the other hand, the leadership struggle between him and Aguinaldo in 1897 was a showdown between contending attitudes: the organic, mystical idea of the Katipunan both as initiator of the revolution and natural governing authority for the emerging nation, and the need to dispense with the secret society in favor of an authority organized along more familiar, existing politico-territorial lines.

Monarchical (for a person who read up on both the French and American revolutions, Bonifacio's intitial satisfaction with being the "Supremo" and, later, his assertion of himself as "*Hari ng Katagalugan*" seem to indicate he preferred either title more than just being "President") or despotic (at the June 12 proclamation, Aguinaldo was elevated as "egregious dictator")? Surely, neither leader should be understood as democratic, though both submitted to the process of election at Tejeros, the first of two embryo republics (the second being at Biak-na-bato). Tejeros ended in a disaster; Biak-na-bato in a truce with Spain. Neither got the recipe for formal organization right.

In contrast to Bonifacio's primarily inwardly oriented proclamation of independence in 1896, that of 1898 was outward-looking. The obsession with the trappings of sovereignty bequeathed to us things that have endured (our national symbols—flag, anthem, richly worded proclamation), as well as memories that continue to embarrass (e.g., the rather over-enthusiastic declaration that we were under the protection of the great and humane North American nation; the vaguely irrelevant mention of a low-ranking American witness to the proceedings).

Colorful as it was, Mabini objected to the whole thing on interesting grounds. Of what value was independence as a protectorate, if the "protecting" nation, America, had made no formal commitment to recognizing the new government, much less protecting it? And of what value was a president or a nation if a bunch of exiles did the proclaiming, unilaterally, and without the (ritual, at least) assent of the country?

These defects were cured—and the date of June 12 fortified—by the formal ratification on Sept. 28, 1898 of Aguinaldo's independence proclamation. This was followed, early in 1899 in Malolos by the adoption of a fine, new Constitution; the election of a president (not a king) though not by popular vote but by territorial representatives; and the establishment of a legislature composed of elected and appointed delegates. That republic, though, was crushed; but it was the first; it had set the bar, and all that would be needed would be to perfect it once independence was restored.

Having borne the brunt of American armed might, Filipinos faced a new task: to wheedle, cajole, bamboozle, plead and preach in order to regain what was lost. On the side of Filipinos was the schizophrenic attitude of America itself toward its colony in the Philippines. Too few Americans wanted the white man's burden urged on by Rudyard Kipling: there was not enough money to be made; Filipinos overwhelmingly preferred independence, and the best Americans could expect was the kind of association Britain had with Canada (though even that was a hard-sell).

Imperialist powers (the British in India, Malaya and elsewhere; the Dutch in the East Indies, now Indonesia; the French in Indochina, today's Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia) watched American power retreat like a glacier melting from the hot air of Filipino speeches, and they were upset.

When World War II broke out, we had been promised independence; we enjoyed a control over internal affairs matched only by Canada, Australia and New Zealand among the colonized countries. Whether it deserved credit or not, America reaped a reservoir of goodwill that, as the war ended, initially made Mao Zedong and Ho Chi Minh look at Americans as natural allies.

Finally, on July 4, 1946, all that came before came together: the anthem and flag of 1898 finally performed, in a signal display of the Philippines' internationally acknowledged sovereignty. A republic was born. Though it passed into history in 1972, it lives on in many ways in our present, fifth, republic.

I myself prefer the view that all these things—nationhood, sovereignty, leadership; and the modes, manner and symbols used to express, interpret, and define these--are best understood as an evolutionary process, one which hasn't ended, and never will. I do think, though, that a blind nostalgia for particular periods is unhealthy. June 12 is but the lodestar in an officially defined constellation of equally brilliant stars.

Igniting an explosion of support for education

PHILIPPINE PUBLIC EDUCATION IS SADDLED WITH SO many shortages—classrooms, teachers, books, teaching materials, and science and IT equipment and facilities. The debate about the reality and the gravity of these shortages goes on, but one only needs to go to a public school to find out the real score.

A lot of resources are already being poured into public schools. But these are not enough. For example, a big chunk of the Department of Education's annual budget (more than P100 billion) goes to paying the salaries of teachers and employees. Little is left to fund the substantial reforms needed to improve student performance.

COMMENTARY

Mario Deriquito

A good number of local governments have taken the lead in improving public education in their areas through infrastructure, subsidies for teachers' salaries and benefits, and scholarship programs. But the room for cooperation and improvement is still very much wide open.

The business sector has been contributing much to education. In fact, according to several surveys on corporate giving, education is a favorite charity among private firms. From July 2004 to June 2005, the corporate sector contributed P1.5 billion to education, the League of Corporate Foundations reported. More and more companies are getting on board the "education bandwagon."

Not only is education key to producing quality manpower for the business sector, it also gives people the chance to get out of poverty. And poverty alleviation translates into more purchasing power, better markets. Thus, companies—big and small—are giving to education.

However, a large chunk of corporate giving goes to the companies' own education programs. While many of these programs are successful, they often lack the needed scale and focus to create an impact on the performance of schoolchildren.

Overseas Filipinos are also a potential source of significant contributions. Studies conducted by some groups reveal that education is among the favorite "causes" of overseas Filipinos.

A year and a half ago, the Gearing Up Internet Literacy and Access for Students (Gilas) was launched to bring the Internet to the Philippines' public high schools. Gilas fund-raising campaign among Filipino-Americans initially yielded very encouraging results, generating not only actual donations, but also an "explosion" of volunteerism among Fil-Ams who came forward to help in the initiative. But more has to be done to unlock the campaign's tremendous potentials.

Education is a national concern, but a significant part of the solution may lie at the local level. Communities have to take on the responsibility of analyzing their problems and mobilizing local resources to implement effective solutions. Steps should be taken to get the support and participation of the governor, mayor, education officials or big businesses operating in a city or province or town; and to solicit the participation of the small businesses and entrepreneurs (e.g, ice plant or hardware or bakery owner), village officials, NGOs, youth groups, PTCAs, locally based universities and colleges, and all concerned citizens.

In fact, proactive communities may just be the "spark" needed to ignite an outpouring of support that will make a difference for public education.

Imagine this scenario: There is a viable plan to improve the performance of students in a town by "x percent" in five years. A local multisectoral group takes the lead to implement the plan. The local ice plant operator, and the bakery and hardware owners give their share. The local university handles the training of teachers. The local alumni association gives their share and asks fellow alumni who lead successful lives in other countries to also contribute.

The barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan allocate a significant amount of their budget to education. Local organizations contribute; ordinary town folk give individual donations. Everybody, in other words, is successfully mobilized and gives their share.

The giving becomes so infectious and remarkable that government, big business, and overseas Filipinos take notice and then give more. Thus, an explosion of local cooperation and donation triggers another explosion of giving at another level. Community efforts unlock national and international support.

Perhaps this "explosion" is not all that farfetched. And this may just be the opportunity many Filipinos are waiting for.

Will this kind of local mobilization work? There are encouraging signs.

In E.B. Magalona, Negros Occidental, a nongovernment organization, called ESKAN, has been very successful in engaging the local community in efforts to improve the performance of public schoolchildren in National Achievement Tests.

In Iloilo City, the mayor and officials of the Department of Education lead thrust to bring the Internet to all the public high schools there, and more education equipment and materials to the public elementary schools.

In the Gilas orientation meetings held in Negros Occidental and Negros Oriental, local stakeholders responded very enthusiastically. Some government officials promised to provide funding for computers. The DepEd promised to provide and validate all needed information. A locally based state college promised to lend its IT teachers for teacher training. A group of NGOs volunteered to organize and assist a local education alliance.

Inspired by its small successes, Gilas has put together local groups to bring the Internet to public high schools in a number of cities and municipalities around the country.

The Foundation for Worldwide People Power continues to build local alliances and plans to go further by organizing communities at the school level. This approach will enable schools and communities to take responsibility for improving the quality of education in their areas.

What are the advantages of local communities taking on the responsibility for education? First, it will make the communities more aware of the problems facing their schools and it will give its members a stronger sense of ownership of the solutions they arrive at. Second, it will unlock local resources. Third, the local initiative can serve as a "magnet" for more external support. Fourth, the programs and projects will have greater sustainability.

The challenge to other education players, especially to the DepEd and education experts, is to make education programs meaningful; but more importantly, to produce results. The community will only participate if it sees that the programs it supports mean something and have real impact on the performance of its schoolchildren.

(Mario Deriquito is the director of the Ayala Foundation's Center for Social Development and, until recently, the chairman of the Education Committee of the League of Corporate Foundations.)

(You may send your comments to the author at edrev@fwwpp.org.)

Magic classrooms in GMA's Enchanted Kingdom

IT SHOULD NOT TAKE 20 YEARS FOR GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO to take us to the "Enchanted Kingdom" of the First World. The fact is we are already there, courtesy of GMA.

One only needs to see the television commercial of Enchanted Kingdom to realize this. In that ad, people can be seen pushing, shoving and bumping into each other in reckless and careless abandon. There is complete chaos. Sad to say, this is the state of the nation under GMA. There is no sense of direction: People are leaving for abroad, the country has virtually been turned into a killing field where journalists and political opponents are being slaughtered with impunity day by day.

First World countries do not rise from enchanted kingdoms; neither are they founded on make-believes. They are the product of their people's hardwork and perseverance. And the First World countries of today became so under the leadership of principled and morally upright men and women, who were ready to resign, perhaps, even take their own lives at the slightest hint of irregularities.

In GMA's Enchanted Kingdom, it is possible to solve classroom shortages or construct 7,000 classrooms in just a few hours.

Expect more magic or magical moments in GMA's Enchanted Kingdom of make-believes. As the TV commercial finale puts it—"the magic lives on in the Enchanted Kingdom."

—ROBERT DEFENSOR,
robert_defensor@yahoo.com.ph

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

On a mission

IN THE JUNE 1 ISSUE OF THE INQUIRER, A NEWS item on "absentee" solons mentioned Rep. Nereus Acosta (Bukidnon) as one of the representatives with the biggest number of absences from July 2004 to July 2005. It was our impression that the report was suggesting that the absentee-representatives did not have valid reasons for their absences.

While we do not speak for the other representatives, allow us to clarify that Representative Acosta was absent for more than 20 session days because he was named the First Filipino World Fellow of Yale University from August to December 2004. As principal author of the Clean Air Act and the Clean Water Act, he was allowed by Speaker Jose de Venecia to go on official mission and collaborate with the Yale Center for Environment Law and Policy on the Global Environmental Sustainability Index.

—VIBETH AMORIN, chief of staff, Office of Rep. Nereus Acosta, House of Representatives

Clarifying the Masinloc 'mysteries'

THIS IS TO CLARIFY ISSUES RAISED BY NEAL Cruz in his May 19 and May 26 columns; and by Conrad R. Banal III in his June 1 column.

1. On PSALM's refusal to foreclose YNN's $11-million performance bond.

YNN's bid is one that will be difficult to duplicate should PSALM call for a rebidding prior to the deadline. It is in the best interest of the government to give this transaction as much leeway to succeed without compromising the bid rules and the contract terms. PSALM granted the extension to maximize the proceeds from the privatization of National Power Corp, as mandated.

2. On granting the extension.

Per contract, once PSALM completes its conditions precedent—which it has—the corporation has the option to set the date for YNN to settle the up-front payment of $227,540,000.352.

3. On YNN's failure to pay up on March 31, 2006.

March 31, 2006 was the original deadline set for YNN to deliver the up-front payment. Exercising its prerogative under the contract, PSALM granted the first extension by moving this deadline to June 30, 2006 for reasons already explained in No. 1 above.

4. On the $3-million increase in the performance bond.

PSALM would rather get the whole bid price of $561.7 million for the Masinloc plant rather than the mere $11-million performance bond.

The $3-million increase in YNN's performance bond is in consideration of the extension and will be an added benefit to the government if the consortium fails to deliver on its promise.

Please note, a rebidding cannot be conducted anytime soon and before the operation of the Wholesale Electricity Spot Market. It must also be stressed that during the extension, the performance bond continues to exist and, therefore, remains valid.

5. On Ranhill's takeover.

It is not true that the takeover is not sanctioned by PSALM's own bidding rules. There is no provision in the bidding procedures or in the Asset Purchase Agreement (APA) which prohibits the winning buyer from allowing new investors to buy into its company. It is YNN's prerogative to allow Ranhill to join its consortium in accordance with law. As long as YNN remains the counterparty of PSALM, YNN complies with APA. What is prohibited is for YNN to liquidate or wind up its corporate existence before it has fully paid the purchase price in the Masinloc deal.

6. On the YNN-Meralco supply contract.

YNN requested that the supply contract with Meralco be made a condition of the performance bond. PSALM denied the request. That would have added a condition to the performance bond and changed the terms of APA, giving YNN better terms than those offered in the original bidding. And that would have violated PSALM's "no post bidding negotiation" policy. PSALM is not a party—neither is it privy—to any negotiation between YNN-Ranhill and Meralco.

—Froilan A. Tampinco
Vice President for Asset Management and Electricity Trading
Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM)

Adjust GSIS monthly pensions to present economic realities

PLEASE ALLOW ME AS AN ELDERLY PENsioner to call the attention of the public and the government to the problems and difficulties that retired government employees have to go through from day to day with their meager monthly GSIS pensions.

A typical example is the case of a retired ordinary classroom teacher. When he was still with the government, he reported to school every day, often coming home with a headache that he had to bear the whole evening. Still, early the next morning, he would rush to catch the first trip just to be able to report for his class on time, never mind the rain. In other words, the public school teacher personifies the loyal, dedicated and persevering public servant.

But when he retires—that is, after spending the best years of his life in government service-he finds out that the GSIS monthly pension (which is seldom, if at all, adjusted to the changing needs of the retirees and the economic realities around him) is not enough to cover even his basic daily needs. I believe this is true of 90 percent of GSIS pensioners whose P5,000 monthly pension (or even less) puts them below the poverty line.

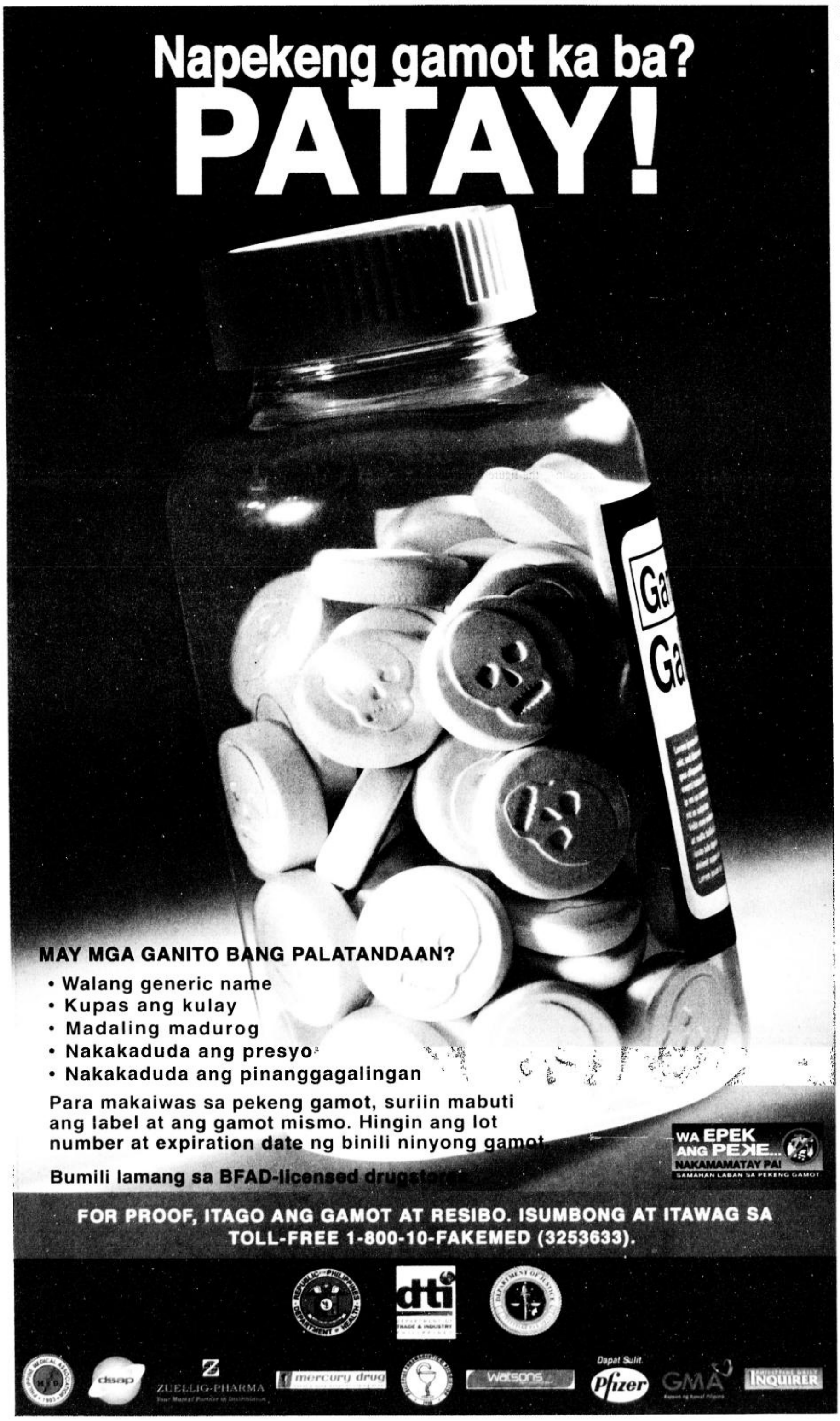
The second factor which has worsened the financial condition of retirees is the EVAT. Yes, the pensioner also pays the EVAT on the electricity, water and LPG, among others, that he and his family consumes. Yes, the pension benefits that Congress contemplated when it passed the Retirement Law in 1951 no longer meet the present realities that retirees face.

Pensioners today should be given a minimum monthly pension of P10,000. In order that the pension fund doesn't get depleted, the Government Service Insurance System should not tap into it for "political" or any other GSIS projects, precisely because it is a trust fund. Trust funds shouldn't be touched by the dirty hands of politics.

Recently, the President announced a monthly salary increase of P1,000 for government employees. Sad to say, GSIS pensioners, who were once also government employees, have altogether been forgotten.

Maybe, through this letter in the INQUIRER, we retirees can start joining forces and work for pension adjustments and a better life for ourselves.

—ANTONIO B. BORJA,
23 G. del Pilar St.,
Dayangdang, Naga City 4400



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TREE FOR TOURISTS BAGUIO residents, including government soldiers plant pine tree seedlings at the Burnham Park to make the city greener again. VINCENT CABREZA / PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Cable watch formed in Davao

DAVAO CITY—THIEVES CONtinue to target the communications network of Philippine Long Distance Company (PLDT) here and company officials suspect that a big syndicate is behind the increasing incident of cable theft.

From Jan. 14 to date, PLDT officials said they recorded at least 22 cases of cable theft in the city.

The latest incident occurred on June 5 when unidentified men cut and stole at least 50 meters of telephone cable in Tugbok district here.

"The alarm sounded but when the police and our team arrived at the scene, the long cable wires were already gone," Claro Landeta, PLDT's area protection division chief, said.

Landeta said not a single incident of cable theft had been solved to date.

"We are not much concerned about the restoration cost," he said.

Landeta said PLDT was more concerned about the "economic cost" of the worsening problem.

"PLDT (Davao branch) alone has already lost some P20 million due to pilferage this year," he said.

To at least minimize the problem, he said PLDT created cable watch 164, where concerned citizens can report suspected thieves.

He said PLDT has also cooperated with other telecommunications providers to address the problem.

Among these companies is Bayantel, which also faces similar problem on cable theft.

Landeta said PLDT is also working with authorities to crack down on junkshop owners buying the stolen cables.

Phone cables are made of copper, which is in demand among junkshops here.

Copper wires sold in junkshops are being shipped to Korea and Japan for reprocessing. *Dennis Jay Santos, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Boards to start wage hike petition hearings

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—THE WESTERN Visayas Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Board (RTWPB) in Western Visayas will start its deliberations on a petition for a P75-wage hike filed by labor groups in the region.

Carlos Boteros, regional director of the Department of Labor and Employment in Western Visayas (Region 6), said they would speed up the deliberation on the proposed wage hike, in compliance with an order of President Macapagal Arroyo.

President Arroyo on June 6 directed the DOLE to fast-track the deliberations on pending petitions for wage increases as she reiterated her support for a reasonable wage hike hammered out by the RTWPBs.

She specifically tasked Labor Undersecretary Danilo Cruz to expedite deliberations on 10 pending petitions filed with the regional wage boards, a press statement from Malacañang said.

Malacañang said the government wanted the regional wage boards to settle the issue on pay adjustments because they are in a better position to determine the appropriate pay increase in their respective areas, amid calls by lawmakers for a legislated wage hike.

Boteros said that under existing wage increase guidelines, the wage boards are not allowed to entertain petitions for wage increase within 12 months from the last increase, unless supervening conditions exist.

The RTWPB granted a P15-wage increase for workers in Western Visayas on June 18 last year.

He said they decided to start deliberation even before the one-year ban lapses because of supervening events, like the frequent increases in the price of oil, which has affected the prices of commodities.

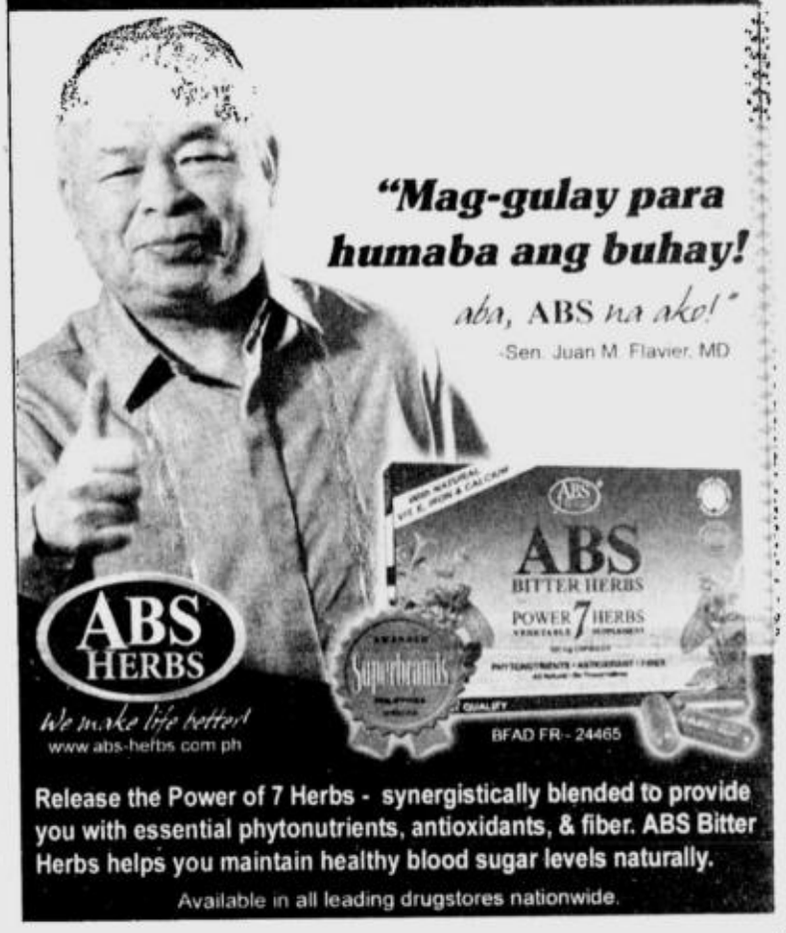
A petition for a P75-wage increase across the board has been filed by three labor groups under the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines before the RTWPB in Western Visayas, Boteros said.

He said the petition, which cited the need for a wage increase because of the rising prices of fuel and basic commodities, was filed by the National Congress of Unions in the Sugar Industry of the Philippines, Congress of Independent Organizations and the Philippine Agricultural, Commercial and Industrial Workers Union.

Wennie Sando, Region 6 RTWPB labor representative, said the wage board representatives of the labor sector from Visayas and Mindanao had met in Cebu and the figure determined to be the lost value of wages in the Visayas was placed at P93 per day.

He added that even if the amount was higher than the P75 per day increase that they cited in their petition, they would still bring the higher amount during the Region 6 RTWPB hearings.

MGA DIABETIKO



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Textbook problem: Out of stock or under revision

By Rolando O. Borrinaga
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—THE pupils of this city's youngest public school continue to suffer from lack of textbooks, but for a different reason this time.

Money to buy the books is no longer a problem, with an American donor willing to buy all the books that the school's children need. However, the donor representative tasked to order the books found out that most of the books they needed were either out of stock or up for revision.

The Diit-Mercyville Community School caught media attention last June 1 because its first batch of 33

Grade 4 pupils did not have a single textbook last year, and an average of three students shared one textbook in the lower grades.

As soon as the INQUIRER issue that carried the item came out, the newspaper received inquiries from an expatriate reader who offered to donate books to the school.

"I was saddened and humiliated to read that there was an entire school without books. There is absolutely no reason for kids in this country, in this day and age, to be going to school without books," said William M. Johnson, an American executive who read the item in Manila.

Johnson, 46, is the vice president for international operations of Versar, Inc., which he describes as a small, specialized defense, engineering and construction firm. He has an office in the Philippines although he works and lives mainly in war-torn Iraq.

Angela Tiangco, Johnson's Manila staff, relayed the book donation offer in calls made last June 1 to Department of Education officials in Manila and Tacloban, and to Juliet Lugas-Lim, the teacher-in-charge of Diit-Mercyville Community School, located 8 km north of the city.

By June 2, Lugas-Lim had faxed to Versar's Manila office a long list of books, of which she needed more than 1,100 copies for the pupils of her school.

Then the new problem came.

After contacting the publishers of DepEd textbooks in Manila, Tiangco said most of the listed books she ordered were out of stock or end of the line (up for revision).

The publishers would only print the ordered number of copies and it seems the DepEd has not placed an order for new textbooks for some time now.

In late 2004, the DepEd's textbook program was at the center of controversy over accusations that many of its textbooks were full of factual, grammatical and conceptual errors.

After days of trying, Tiangco had only purchased for Johnson more than 300 copies, or barely one-fourth of the total number of books requested by Lugas-Lim.

These books will be turned over to the school on June 19, the birthday of national hero Dr. Jose Rizal.

The day the news broke, Lugas-Lim got scolded by some of her superiors for "going to the media."

But she also received words of comfort from fellow school heads who attended the seminar-workshop in Naval, Biliran, where she reported her school's problems.

A surprise offer came from the city government of Tacloban.

For the first time since its establishment in 2002, the Diit-Mercyville Community received assistance in the form of a fresh coat of paint for its two buildings, Lugas-Lim said.

But other problems remain.

The temporary building to house the first batch of Grade 5 pupils is far from finished.

Since there has been no addition to the four teachers assigned to the school, and due to lack of an extra room to accommodate its 200 pupils from five grades, one teacher handles Grades 2 and 3 by shifts, one in the morning, the other in the afternoon.

The school also does not have water and electrical connections, and the one toilet each for boys and girls are inadequate for its need.

"This country has every resource needed, and the inability of the young (and the future of the country) to learn in a proper and adequate learning environment is heartbreaking and frustrating. Whatever the cause, the remedies are there, and it really takes only a couple of things to fix these problems," Johnson said.

Ito na ang inyong pagkakataon para mapanood ng LIVE ang laban ni Manny Pacquiao at Oscar Larios!

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Journalist files complaint vs military officer

COTABATO CITY—A JOURNALIST working for a Catholic radio station in Kidapawan City has filed complaints against a ranking military official for allegedly calling her a communist.

Malu Manar, program director of radio station dxND, told the INQUIRER on Saturday the complaint was filed against Col. John Oswald Bucu of the Army's 40th Infantry Battalion before the office of Col. Ruperto Pabustan, chief of the Army's 602nd Infantry Brigade.

Manar said on June 7, Bucu allegedly told reporters during a press conference that she is a member of the New People's Army (NPA).

Manar admitted she was not in the press conference but said colleagues had informed her of Bucu's statements.

"Malu is a communist. She should admit that, because communists are now accepted in the country," Manar quoted Bucu as having said.

But Bucu denied Manar's claims.

"I never mentioned anything like that. If she was so certain, she should tell me who her source was," Bucu told the INQUIRER.

In a complaint she sent to Pabustan, Manar said Bucu even accused her of being a card-bearing member of the CPP.

"These are baseless accusations. Bucu has no proof, whatsoever, that I am such. This is conduct unbecoming of an officer: Accusing somebody of something without enough proof," Manar wrote.

Manar, also a correspondent for Manila Bulletin, said embracing peoples' issues like, poverty, human rights, ancestral domain and other tribal issues, respect for women and children's rights, just labor, and fair justice does not make her a communist.

"Is digging deeper into issues—not just accepting facts at its face value—make me a communist?" she said in the complaint.

Manar said she is a member of the Peace and Conflict Journalists Network (PeCoJoN) Philippines but that did not make her a communist too.

"The training that I got in more than 15 years of journalism work here and abroad made me what I am today—a print and broadcast journalist, not a communist," she pointed out.

Bucu said if Manar was not a communist, then she has no reason to get mad.

"Why will she get mad if it's not true?" Bucu said.

Pabustan said he was planning to conduct a dialogue between Manar and Bucu to resolve the issue.

Guns

In Pagadian City, majority of journalists here have rejected a government offer for them to legally acquire guns.

The offer, made by Justice Secretary Raul Gonzales and ranking police officials, came in the wake of increasing incidents of attack on members of the media.

During a dialogue with police officials here on June 6, two journalists signified their interest in the offer.

"I wouldn't mind carrying firearms if it means protection," Richard Villaronte of Radio Mindanao Network's station dxPR, said.

Dante Tual, station manager of dxCA AM radio, agreed with Villaronte.

"Whenever I see someone riding a motorcycle when I'm driving, I always feel the need to have a firearm beside me," he said.

But for most media practitioners here, the attacks on journalists could not be solved by carrying guns but by the police's determination to catch the culprits.

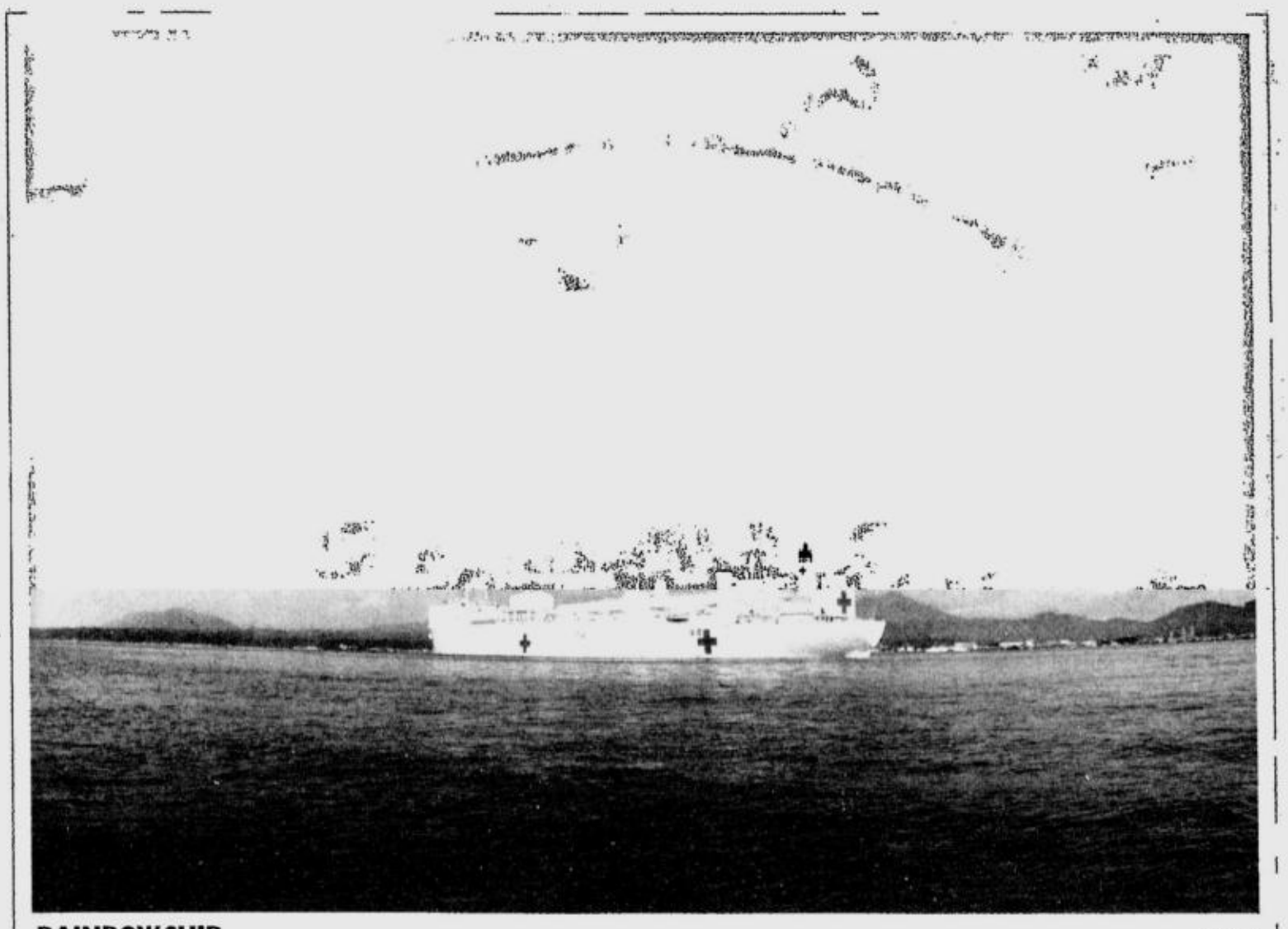
Ramil Bangues, program director of RMN-dxPR, said the only way to stop the killings is for the police to do its job.

"We must send a message by arresting the killers," said Bangues.

Bangues said the carrying of firearms could not "prevent assassins from killing us."

"Carrying firearms invites more danger than protection," he said.

Jeoffrey Maitem and Michael Sarcauga, PDI Mindanao Bureau



RAINBOW SHIP US NAVY

A rainbow appears over the US Military Sealift Command Hospital ship USNS Mercy as it is anchored off the coast of Jolo City on June 8. Mercy is a 5-month humanitarian deployment to Asia and the Pacific, working with local doctors providing medical and dental care.

'Media killings should not discourage young journalists'

BAGUIO CITY—THE SPATE OF killings of journalists should not dampen the spirit of campus writers who want to embark on a career in journalism, according to the College Editors Guild Baguio-Benguet chapter.

Anjo Rey Cerdeña, deputy secretary general of CEGP-Baguio-Benguet, said in a forum here on June 5 that the killings should instead inspire the youth to pursue their goal as agents of truth.

"This should also serve as a challenge to the younger generation of writers to fight for press freedom," he said.

The killings of journalists have prompted campus journalists to press for alternative journalism, which, he noted, is significant at a time when the mainstream media is being repressed, he added.

"We condemn this kind of repression among journalists and we shall always push for campus press freedom," he said.

Human rights lawyer Pablito Sanidad, who is president of the Free Legal Assistance Group (FLAG), urged students who aspire to be journalists to press on with their dreams.

Sanidad, also a columnist of a community paper here, attended a candle-lighting ceremony for slain journalists at the Baguio Cathedral last week.

"I came here to repeat the same rituals and wonder how many times do we have to do this? How many times do we have to mourn the killings of press people?" Sanidad asked.

He likened the media situation today to the martial law years when the administration of the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos banned news outfits.

"However, the flame of truth will never die. No amount of repression will stop our yearning for truth, they may kill us today, but tomorrow, more of us will come," he said.

Mayette Iniguid, a CEGP member, said as younger members of the media community, they vowed to continue the work of journalists in their school.

Baguio-Benguet Bishop Carlito Cenzon led the ceremony and prayer for journalists. "Despite what is happening, let us not be afraid, God is with us in this mission," he said.

The National Union of Journalist of the Philippines said 79 journalists have been killed since 1986. Most of them were killed during the term of President Macapagal-Arroyo. *Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

AMPARO LACAY, 78, of radio station dzGS recalls her sacrifices as a journalist from 1962 to the present, during a recent candle lighting activity in General Santos City protesting the killings of journalists. AQUILES ZONIO/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

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Night high school educates town youth

By Gerald Gene R. Querubin
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

STA. CRUZ, MARINDUQUE—POVERTY is not a hindrance for an individual to succeed. Administrators and graduates alike of the Night High School Program of the Sta. Cruz Institute in this town have proven this credo to be true.

For the past 25 years, the educational institution has changed the lives of the working youth who have availed of the program.

Some of the graduates who entered the school as house help, nanny, errand boy or storekeeper are now schoolteachers.

Other graduates have become employees of companies outside the province while others have been motivated to become businessmen or entrepreneurs.

Liwayway Pizarra, 1991 class valedictorian, is now administrator and manager of her own preschool while Gerry Ong, another former student of the program, is owner of the biggest and most productive water refilling station in Sta. Cruz.

Franco Parreño credits the formal training provided by the school as a sound foundation for his current work as chair of Barangay Libjo in this town.

Rosario Honorica-Bajado, who used to work as a storekeeper in a pharmacy when she was still a night high school student, is now the Grade 1 adviser and teacher in the elementary department of SCI, her alma mater.

"We're glad for the opportunity given us by the program," she said.

It was in June 1980 when the late lawyer Policarpio Retardo, founder of the institute and former municipal mayor of this town, introduced and offered the only night high school program in the province.

Motivated by a desire to provide quality education to the youth, he opened the door for the underprivileged youth to study and finish secondary education despite their tight financial condition.

Young people were given the chance to study and finish high school.

Secondary education

Even teenagers who help their families by engaging in farming, fishing or tending to small livelihood activities for their daily subsistence, found a chance to complete their secondary education.

These youth work the whole day and attend evening classes held Mondays to Saturdays from 5 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Adela Reluya, night high school principal of the institute, said 90 percent of the school's population are working students with the remaining 10 percent helping their parents during daytime to earn a living.

Most of these students pay for their own tuition from their earnings while the rest are "pa-aral" or those who work because their tuition, school uniforms and allowances are being paid for by their employers.

"Our night high school is a five-year secondary education program duly recognized and supported by the Department of Education," said Reluya.

Aside from low tuition charged by the night school, the students get additional financial support from the government through the Educational Service Contracting (ESC) program of the Financial Assistance for Private Education of the Department of Education.

The ESC provides P4,000 annual tuition subsidies to qualified students who are financially incapable.

Mission

SCI president Rachel Pedro said the institution will continue to live by its mission of producing graduates with a "mind, heart and conscience."

She explained that "in striving for excellence in education for a period of 55 years now," SCI's thrust is to continue to enhance the potential of the youth in the province.

SCI was registered and founded on May 12, 1951 as Quezon Memorial High School and was renamed Santa Cruz Institute in 1965.

At present it offers preschool, elementary, day high school, night high school and college education programs.

Courses offered in the college department are 2-year Computer Secretarial, Computer Programming and Computer Technician courses and 4-year Bachelor of Science in Computer Science, Bachelor in Secondary Education and Bachelor of Science in Commerce.

Many kids fail to enrol in Caraga, DepEd says

By Chris V. Panganiban
PDI Mindanao Bureau

SAN FRANCISCO, AGUSAN DEL Sur—Education officials in Caraga said many students had yet to enroll in the region this school year, a week after classes began on June 5.

Isidro Biol Jr., Department of Education spokesperson in the region, said that as of Friday, principals in the eight school divisions in Caraga had reported to field monitoring teams that many students failed to get their report cards, a prerequisite for enrollment.

Although the DepEd had yet to collate the total number of enrollees this year, Biol expressed concern that the department's projected increase in enrollment of 3.57 percent this school year might not be realized. Last school year, Caraga had 471,035 elementary and high school students.

Biol said the department could not ascertain why many students had failed to enroll this year.

Caraga is one of the country's poorest regions, government surveys showed.

Studies showed that poor students were the ones normally dropping out of school.

But Biol said education officials were still hoping that those who had yet to enroll would avail themselves of the late enrollment offer from the DepEd.

They have until June 16 to catch up, but only transferees and students suffering from sickness could still be accepted at a much later date, it was learned.

Biol said school officials were told to create an enrollment committee for late registrants.

A SCIENCE class demonstration of electronically-aided lecturing/ learning of selected students in Cotabato City's Sero Elementary School show off the benefit of modern access to knowledge. Thanks to modern technology.

PDI PHOTO / NASH B. MAULANA, PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

New technology used to teach English, Math, Science in ARMM

COTABATO CITY—EDUCATION officials said they were hoping that added inputs, like electronically transmitted teaching references, could help address students' declining proficiency in English and Math.

A recent survey has indicated that the country was facing a setback in the world employment market due to the declining proficiency in written and oral English among Filipinos.

Lorena Daabay, teacher incharge for the Text2Teach program, said the Education and Livelihood Skills Alliance (Elsa) will be adding English and Mathematics to the current Media Master that she uses to teach her Grade 6 science pupils at the Sero Elementary School.

Text2teach uses a system that integrates digital satellite broadcasting into a device called Media Master, into which, learning materials in the form of video are directly transmitted and can be opened inside the classroom using a 36-inch TV screen.

It used to be called Bridge IT Program and was pioneered in 2003 by the International Youth Foundation (IYF) in collaboration with Nokia, Pearson Education and the United Nations Development Program Global Support System. Elsa, along with corporate social arms of big companies as well as humanitarian organizations, brought the technology into Mindanao for free.

Daabay demonstrated Friday how fast her Text2teach class can absorb a science lesson, for instance, on the atmosphere and pollution, using a 36-inch TV set connected to the Media Master, instead of the traditional blackboard.

It took her only 10 minutes to explain the lesson, drawing impressive responses from many of the grade-schoolers.

Dr. Thomas J. Kral, chief of the US Assistance for International Development Philippine Mission's Education Office, said his office had partly funded some of Elsa's undertakings out of its aid program for the country, which had ranged annually between $600 million to $900 million.

Other collaborating groups and organizations for the program are the DepEd, Ayala Foundation, Seamed Infotech, Globe Telecom, Tsika Touch Mobile and Dream Satellite. *Nash B. Maulana, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

'Lumad' festival opens in Agusan del Sur today

SAN FRANCISCO, AGUSAN DEL Sur—The province formally opens the 14th Naliyagan Festival today with an array of spectacular events crafted to pay homage to the rich cultural heritage of the *lumad*.

The festival would run for eight days.

"This is one of the grandest affairs we ever had," said Mike Santos, provincial tourism officer.

Santos, who is also festival program director, said the provincial government spent P4 million for this year's festivities.

He said the eight-day affair will have "priceless returns."

Already, organizers are keeping their fingers crossed that more visitors and tourists will flock to this year's festivities, which will be held at the Naliyagan Plaza grounds.

Gov. Adolph Edward Plaza said the rich culture of the Manobo and other *lumad* tribes in the province are so priceless that officials did not mind spending millions for the festival.

He said the rich cultural heritage will be depicted through the colorful tribal street dancing, an ethnic-inspired beauty pageant called Bai Naliyagan 2006, the indigenous peoples summit and a showcase of the best local products.

Plaza said this year's festival carries the theme "Lifting Productivity" since they were still aiming to make the province a major producer of agricultural products in Mindanao.

"We still aim to become a food basket in Mindanao," Plaza said.

Aside from the ethnic-inspired activities, visitors would also be treated to the 1st Naliyagan Timber Challenge, where workers of logging companies and small-scale loggers, will try to edge each other out to become the fastest in cutting and carrying logs.

Another event to watch is the Binaga Festival, which features the simultaneous grilling of mudfish called *haluan* and *tilapia*. It will be participated in by government employees and those from the private sector.

Provincial agricultural officer Max Gegato said some 2,000 kilos of haluan and tilapia from the Agusan River will be grilled during the Binaga Festival, which is also aimed at the Guinness Book of World Records.

Gegato said they were also preparing for the agri-industrial fair, which features a search for the biggest vegetables.

Some 2,000 lumad will later converge at a summit, which would be spearheaded by the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples.

The summit, to be held at the D.O. Plaza Memorial Sports Complex, would tackle the status of their ancestral domain claims.

Tribal leaders in the province have been complaining that logging companies intrude into their ancestral domain. *Chris V. Panganiban, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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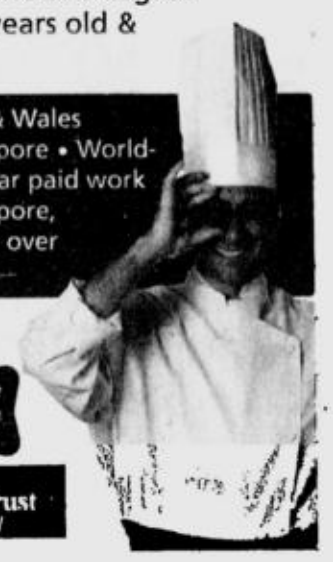

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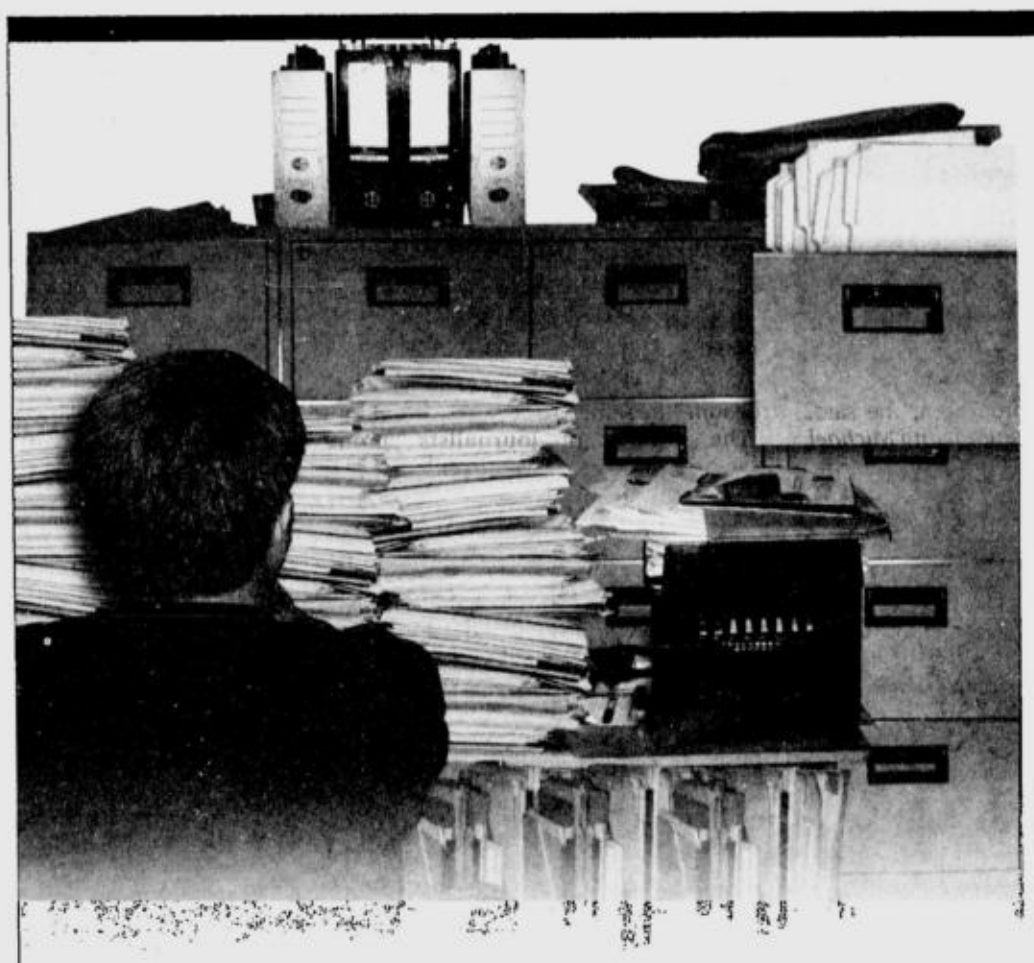

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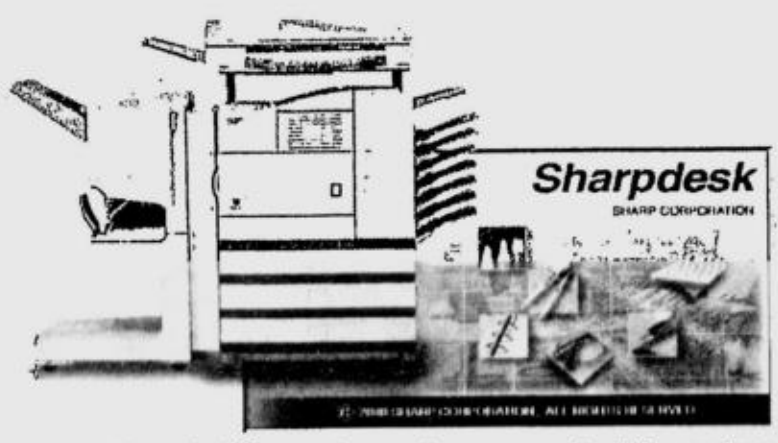

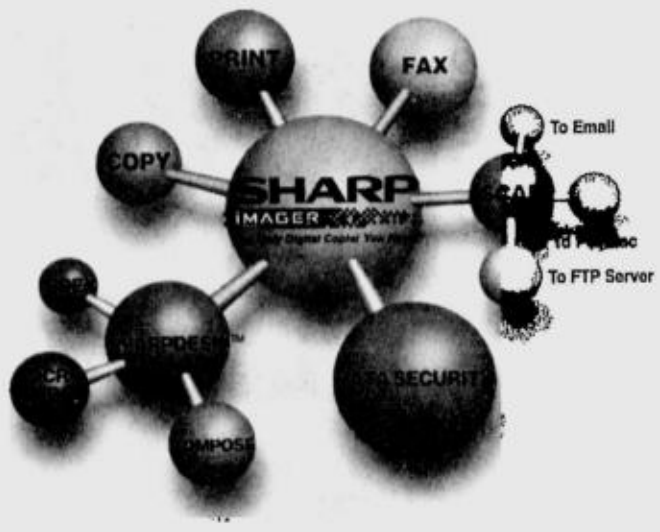

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M E S S A G E

Warmest greetings to the officers and members of the Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Inc. as you celebrate the 5th Filipino – Chinese Friendship Day.

I laud your concerted efforts to ensure the success of this celebration. Now on its 5th year, Filipino-Chinese Friendship Day reminds us of the mutually beneficial trade and diplomatic relations between Filipinos and Chinese. It also embodies our strong historical and cultural ties that have been preserved over the years and have contributed to the advancement of Philippine society.

I am one with you in celebrating this momentous occasion. I hope that this event will inspire us all to further strengthen our collaborative efforts not only in trade and culture but also in the fight against poverty and [illegible]. I am confident that through unity, hard work and the active participation of all sectors of society, we can best the odds and effect crucial reforms to ensure a better future for our people.

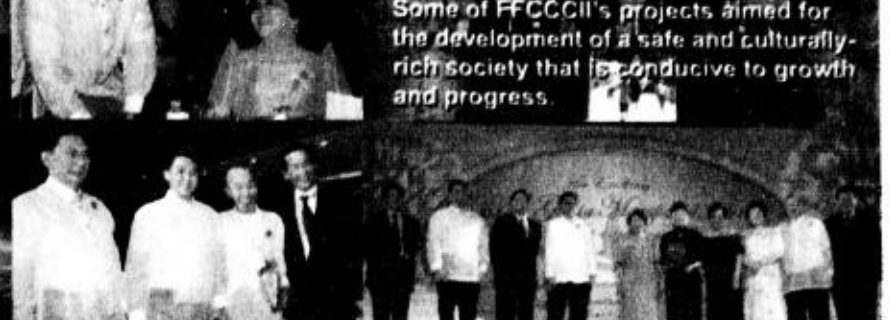
MABUHAY!

GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO

Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Inc. Celebrates PHILIPPINE INDEPENDENCE DAY

Some of FFCCCII's projects aimed for the development of a safe and culturally-rich society that is conducive to growth and progress.

The 108th Philippine Independence Day and 5th Filipino Chinese Friendship Day. The Federation and its constituents lauds the government's steadfast dedication in nation building.



Bearing the proud dignity of their Filipino-Chinese forefathers, FFCCCII reaffirm its commitment to the Filipino nation by celebrating independence and securing the freedom enjoyed by many today.

By focusing its resources on various sectoral, industrial and community-based projects, the FFCCCII is elevating the holistic development of the country to greater heights.

FFCCCII aims for a better society through various socio-civic programs as part of its corporate social responsibility efforts.

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FFCCCII is a committed advocate of peace and anti-crime campaigns aimed at countering crime activities which hinders national prosperity.

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LA 10,226sqm; FA 10,226sqm
National Rd., Bantug, San Miguel Bulacan; 2-storey residential bldg. & warehouse
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Min. Bid Price: P 7,925,000

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LA 918sqm; FA 918sqm
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single detached residential bungalow
Min. Bid Price: P 1,100,000

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LA 754sqm; FA 754sqm
Bigte, Norzagaray, Bulacan
single detached residential bungalow
Min. Bid Price: P 590,000

BUL-L-33 - House & Lot
LA 396sqm; FA 396sqm
Dona Crispina Subd., Agnaya, Plaridel
Bulacan; 3BR, residential bungalow
Min. Bid Price: P 677,000

BUL-L-34 - House & Lot
LA 366sqm; FA 366sqm
Banaba cor. Agoho St., Town & Country North Executive Village, Manlao, Bulacan
split level residential house
Min. Bid Price: P 1,742,000

BUL-L-35 - H&L, Warehouse
LA 14,468sqm; FA 14,468sqm
Tabang, Guiguinto, Bulacan; improved with various bldgs., ricemill & warehouse
Min. Bid Price: P 62,523,000

BUL-L-36 - H&L, Warehouse
LA 14,726sqm; FA 14,726sqm
Sta. Isabel, Malolos, Bulacan
warehouse & residential bldgs
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BUL-L-37 – 2-Storey House & Lot
LA 474sqm; FA 474sqm
Along Gen. Alejo Ave. Parulan, Plaridel
2-storey house
Min. Bid Price: P 3,698,000

BUL-L-38 – Warehouse
LA 49,114sqm; FA 765sqm
Along National Road, Matimbubong
San Ildefonso, Bulacan; warehouse bldg
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BUL-L-39 – Warehouse
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vacant agricultural lot (landlocked)
Min. Bid Price: P 1,950,000

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LA 35,812sqm
Sta. Lucia, San Miguel, Bulacan
vacant agricultural lot
Min. Bid Price: P 1,343,000

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LA 2,545sqm
Sta. Lucia , San Miguel, Bulacan
vacant residential lot
Min. Bid Price: P 382,000

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LA 3,066sqm
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BUL-V-16 - Vacant Lot
LA 1,147sqm
Lot 1 Cagayan Valley Road, Makinabang, Baliga, Bulacan; piggery
Min. Bid Price: P 1,500,000

BUL-V-17 - Vacant Lot
LA 250sqm
Phase 1, Northfields Exec.Village, Longos, Malolos, Bulacan; residential lot
Min. Bid Price: P 740,000

BUL-V-18 - Vacant Lot
LA 1,320sqm
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vacant lot
Min. Bid Price: P 1,980,000

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LA 300sqm; FA 300sqm
#67 Quebiawan
4 bedrooms residential bungalow
Min. Bid Price: P 906,000

PAM-L-4 - House & Lot
LA 136sqm; FA 136sqm
Camia St., San Pedro Cutud
2-storey residential house
Min. Bid Price: P 612,000

PAM-L-5 – Building
LA 970sqm; FA 1,140sqm
Along McArthur Highway, Dolores
2-storey commercial building
Min. Bid Price: P 16,000,000

PAM-V-3 - Vacant Lot
LA 1,089sqm
Sto. Rosario
vacant residential lot
Min. Bid Price: P 871,000

OTHERS

PAM-L-2 - House & Lot
LA 160sqm; FA 167sqm
Poblacion, Masantol
2-storey residential bldg.
Min. Bid Price: P 320,000

PAM-V-1 - Vacant Lot
LA 31,383sqm
San Rafael & Prado, Lubao
33 agri/industrial vacant lots
Min. Bid Price: P 2,041,000

PAM-V-2 - Vacant Lot
LA 25,340sqm
San Rafael & Prado, Lubao
vacant agri/industrial lot
Min. Bid Price: P 1,478,000

NUEVA ECIJA

CABANATUAN CITY

NE-L-2 - House & Lot
LA 390sqm; FA 36sqm
L7 B5, Magsaysay Park, Kalikid Sur, Cabanatuan City
1-storey residential building
Min. Bid Price: P 391,000

NE-L-3 – Apartment
LA 284sqm; FA 366sqm
L9 B5, Mansanas st., Villa Benita Subd. Cabanatuan City
6 door 2-storey apartment
Min. Bid Price: P 1,497,000

NE-L-4 - House & Lot
LA 23,411sqm; FA 22,502sqm
AGL Heights, Kalikid Sur
Cabanatuan City
254 parcel of lots (house and lot)
Min. Bid Price: P 26,692,000

NE-L-5 - House & Lot
LA 203sqm; FA 109sqm
#92 Avocado st, Villa Benita Subd.
Cabanatuan City
3 bedroom residential bungalow
Min. Bid Price: P 626,000

NE-L-8 - Com'l/Res'l
LA 295sqm; FA 590sqm
Along Sanciangco St., Cabanatuan City
commercial/residential bldg
Min. Bid Price: P 4,335,000

NE-L-9 – Warehouse
LA 5,751sqm; FA 4,398sqm
Along Maharlika Highway Bo. Bernardo, Cabanatuan City
warehouse
Min. Bid Price: P 52,443,000

NE-V-1 - Vacant Lot
LA 370sqm
Kalikid Sur, Cabanatuan City
vacant residential lot
Min. Bid Price: P 97,000

NE-V-2 - Vacant Lot
LA 375sqm
Kalikid Sur, Cabanatuan City
vacant residential lot
Min. Bid Price: P 98,000

NE-V-3 - Vacant Lot
LA 371sqm
Kalikid Sur, Cabanatuan City
vacant residential lot
Min. Bid Price: P 97,000

NE-V-4 - Vacant Lot
LA 339sqm
Bantug Norte, Cabanatuan City
vacant residential lot
Min. Bid Price: P 82,000

NE-V-5 - Vacant Lot
LA 219sqm
Bantug, Cabanatuan City
vacant residential lot
Min. Bid Price: P 246,000

NE-V-6 - Vacant Lot
LA 390sqm
L2 B5, Magsaysay Park, Kalikid Sur
Cabanatuan City
residential/commercial vacant lot
Min. Bid Price: P 294,000

NE-V-7 - Vacant Lot
LA 390sqm
L6 B5, Magsaysay Park, Kalikid Sur
Cabanatuan City
residential/commercial vacant lot
Min. Bid Price: P 294,000

NE-V-8 - Vacant Lot
LA 390sqm
L5 B5, Magsaysay Park, Kalikid Sur
Cabanatuan City
residential/commercial vacant lot
Min. Bid Price: P 294,000

NE-V-9 - Vacant Lot
LA 390sqm
L4 B5, Magsaysay Park, Kalikid Sur
Cabanatuan City
residential/commercial vacant lot
Min. Bid Price: P 241,000

NE-V-10 - Vacant Lot
LA 230sqm; FA 230sqm
Leo-Gornica Homesite, DS Garcia,
Cabanatuan City
vacant residential lot
Min. Bid Price: P 431,000

NE-V-11 - Vacant Lot
LA 960sqm; FA 960sqm
Along Melencio St., Poblacion,
Cabanatuan City
vacant-commercial lot
Min. Bid Price: P 8,640,000

OTHERS

NE-L-1 – Warehouse
LA 9,536sqm; FA 1,416sqm
National H-way, San Mariano, Sta. Rosa
2 industrial warehouse bldg.
Min. Bid Price: P 8,157,000

NE-L-6 – Warehouse
LA 276sqm; FA 84sqm
A. Salvador st., Poblacion, Guimba
warehouse building
Min. Bid Price: P 523,000

NE-L-7 – Apartment
LA 960sqm; FA 472sqm
Christianville Subd., Abar 1st
San Jose City
8 door, 2-storey apartment
Min. Bid Price: P 3,932,000

TARLAC

TAR-L-1 – Building
LA 2,872sqm; FA 2,872sqm
Ramos rd., Balite, Pura, Tarlac
1-storey residential building
Min. Bid Price: P 475,000

TAR-L-2 - House & Lot
LA 575sqm; FA 575sqm
Capitol Gardens, Bo. San Roque, Tarlac
house & lot
Min. Bid Price: P 1,300,000

TAR-L-3 - House & Lot
LA 5,463sqm; FA 5,463sqm
Bgy. Tibag, Tarlac City; 3 parcels of lot
with bungalow/warehouse
Min. Bid Price: P 2,599,000

TAR-L-4 - Commercial Building
LA 1,405sqm; FA 1,405sqm
JRT Bldg., MH Del Pilar st., cor. Hilario st., Tarlac City; 3-storey commercial bldg.
Min. Bid Price: P 34,027,000

TAR-L-5 – Apartment
LA 1,404sqm; FA 1,404sqm
La Mita Homes, Calle Lucinda, San Sebastian, Tarlac City
11 door 2-storey apartment
Min. Bid Price: P 5,972,000

TAR-V-1 - Vacant Lot
LA 240sqm; FA 240sqm
Lot 2233-K Prov'l road, San Roque, La Paz, Tarlac ; vacant residential lot
Min. Bid Price: P 45,000

TAR-V-2 - Vacant Lot
LA 54,721sqm
Bo. San Roque, La Paz, Tarlac
3 parcels of agri lots
Min. Bid Price: P 1,642,000

BATAAN

BAT-L-2 - House & Lot
LA 718sqm; FA 718sqm
Balon Anito, Mariveles, Bataan
split level bungalow
Min. Bid Price: P 1,641,000

BAT-L-3 - House & Lot
LA 900sqm; FA 900sqm
Q. Ville Subd., Daang Bilolo
2-storey residential house
Min. Bid Price: P 3,609,000

BAT-V-1 - Vacant Lot
LA 1,039sqm
Ibabao, Morong, Bataan
5 vacant residential lots
Min. Bid Price: P 582,000

BAT-V-2 - Vacant Lot
LA 485sqm
Sabang, Morong, Bataan
2 vacant residential lots
Min. Bid Price: P 272,000

BAT-V-3 - Vacant Lot
LA 393sqm
Prov. Road, Nagbalayong, Morong
Bataan
vacant residential lot
Min. Bid Price: P 252,000

CAGAYAN

CAG-L-1 – Warehouse
LA 500sqm; FA 383sqm
Gonzaga ext., Ugac Norte, Tuguegarao City
with warehouse
Min. Bid Price: P 2,000,000

CAG-L-2 - House & Lot
LA 2,761sqm; FA 137sqm
Linao road, Caritan Sur, Tuguegarao City
single-storey building
Min. Bid Price: P 4,282,000

CAG-L-3 – Warehouse
LA 1,687sqm; FA 578sqm
Mungo, Tuao, Cagayan
with warehouse, office (3 lots)
Min. Bid Price: P 1,658,000

CAG-L-4 - H&L, Warehouse
LA 3,049sqm; FA 1,713sqm
Alabug, Tuao, Cagayan
with warehouse, residential house
Min. Bid Price: P 3,829,000

CAG-L-5 – Warehouse
LA 1,000sqm; FA 306sqm
Maddarulog, Solana, Cagayan
with warehouse
Min. Bid Price: P 240,000

CAG-L-6 - House & Lot
LA 2,837.5sqm; FA 130sqm
Guising, Gattaran
2-storey residential bldg.
Min. Bid Price: P 615,000

ISABELA

IS-L-1 – Warehouse
LA 2,686sqm; FA 250sqm
J P Rizal Ave., Bugallon, Ramon
with warehouse
Min. Bid Price: P 1,554,000

IS-L-2 - House & Lot
LA 1,200sqm; FA 90sqm
Calamagui 1st, Ilagan
house & lot w/ warehouse
Min. Bid Price: P 2,700,000

IS-L-3 – Warehouse
LA 1,497sqm; FA 2,277sqm
Concepcion st., Roxas Dist., Naguilian
residential lot with house & warehouse (3 TCTS)
Min. Bid Price: P 3,000,000

IS-L-4 - H&L, Warehouse
LA 2,806sqm; FA 2,806sqm
Centro Cabagan
two adjoined lots, improved by a residential bldg and a warehouse
Min. Bid Price: P 2,240,000

IS-L-5 - House & Lot
LA 1,928sqm; FA 186sqm
(encroached by NIA) Ipil, Echague
w/ split type building
Min. Bid Price: P 901,000

IS-L-6 - House & Lot
LA 1,669sqm; FA 1,206sqm
Puzon subd., San Fermin, Cauayan City
w/ residential house
Min. Bid Price: P 704,000

IS-L-7 – Warehouse
LA 7,668sqm; FA 1,274sqm
Minante, Cauayan City
shed type warehouse
Min. Bid Price: P 5,626,000

IS-L-8 - Cockpit/Sports Center
LA 35,000sqm; FA 35,000sqm
Cauayan City
unirrigated riceland
Min. Bid Price: P 6,750,000

IS-L-9 – Poultry
LA 7,772sqm; FA 7,772sqm
Minante II, Cauayan City
w/ poultry houses
Min. Bid Price: P 1,070,000

IS-L-10 - Poultry Farm
LA 15,794sqm; FA 3,828sqm
Balintocatoc, Santiago City; poultry farm
with poultry houses, warehouse, office
Min. Bid Price: P 5,064,000

IS-L-11 - House & Lot
LA 283sqm; FA 283sqm
Quezon Ave., Victory Sur, Santiago City
improved with dilapidated house
Min. Bid Price: P 679,000

IS-L-18 – Warehouse
LA 1,505sqm; FA 272sqm
Bo. Dipantan, Nagtipunan, Quirino
1-storey warehouse
Min. Bid Price: P 696,000

IS-L-19 - H&L, Warehouse
LA 374sqm; FA 361sqm
District 1 , San Manuel, Isabela
2-storey residential w/ warehouse
Min. Bid Price: P 1,050,000

IS-V-1 - Vacant Lot
LA 24,981sqm
Bgy Rd., Arabiat, Echague, Isabela
agri land with improvements (no value)
Min. Bid Price: P 200,000

IS-V-2 - Vacant Lot
LA 984sqm
Mun. Rd., Near Luna St., Poblacion, Roxas
vacant residential lot
Min. Bid Price: P 315,000

IS-V-3 - Vacant Lot
LA 2,350sqm
Dallig, Aurora, Isabela
4 vacant residential lots
Min. Bid Price: P 804,000

IS-V-4 - Vacant Lot
LA 640sqm
Bo. Sta. Rita, Bagong Linis, Aurora, Isabela
vacant residential lots
Min. Bid Price: P 360,000

IS-V-5 - Vacant Lot
LA (interior lot) 53,519sqm
Callao, Alicia, Isabela
irrigated rice land
Min. Bid Price: P 650,000

IS-V-7 - Vacant Lot
LA 1198sqm
Quirino st., Alicia, Isabela
vacant residential lot
Min. Bid Price: P 430,000

IS-V-8 - Vacant Lot
LA 968sqm
Calaoacan, Alicia, Isabela
vacant residential lot
Min. Bid Price: P 350,000

IS-V-10 - Vacant Lot
LA 480sqm
Bagong Linis, Aurora, Isabela
vacant residential lot
Min. Bid Price: P 288,000

IS-V-11 - Vacant Lot
LA 294sqm
Tuguegarao, Echague, Isabela
vacant residential lot
Min. Bid Price: P 50,000

IS-V-12 - Vacant Lot
LA 2,009sqm
Bantug, Roxas, Isabela
vacant residential lot
Min. Bid Price: P 1,700,000

IS-V-13 - Vacant Lot
LA 1,900sqm
National Highway, Bantug, Roxas, Isabela
vacant residential lot
Min. Bid Price: P 1,800,000

IS-V-14 - Vacant Lot
LA 960sqm
Bantug, Roxas, Isabela
vacant residential lot (3 lots)
Min. Bid Price: P 500,000

IS-V-15 - Vacant Lot
LA 5,000sqm
Aurora, Alicia, Isabela
vacant agricultural lot
Min. Bid Price: P 188,000

IS-V-16 - Vacant Lot
LA 403sqm
San Fermin, Cauayan City
vacant residential lot
Min. Bid Price: P 212,000

IS-V-17 - Vacant Lot
LA 408sqm;
San Fermin, Cauayan City
vacant residential lot
Min. Bid Price: P 214,000

IS-V-18 - Vacant Lot
LA 520sqm
National Highway, Poblacion, Cauayan City
vacant residential lot
Min. Bid Price: P 1,560,000

IS-V-19 - Vacant Lot
LA 528sqm
National Highway, Poblacion, Cauayan City
vacant residential lot
Min. Bid Price: P 1,584,000

IS-V-20 - Vacant Lot
LA 8,000sqm
Minante II, Cauayan City
residential/agri lot
Min. Bid Price: P 2,754,000

IS-V-21 - Vacant Lot
LA 15,000sqm
Nungnungan, Cauayan City
agricultural lot
Min. Bid Price: P 7,150,000

IS-V-22 - Vacant Lot
LA 809sqm
Bo. Road, San Fermin, Cauayan City
vacant residential lot
Min. Bid Price: P 825,000

IS-V-23 - Vacant Lot
LA 966sqm
Airport Road San Fermin, Cauayan
vacant residential lot
Min. Bid Price: P 800,000

IS-V-24 - Vacant Lot
LA 6,188sqm
Minante I, Cauayan City
vacant residential lots (2 lots)
Min. Bid Price: P 991,000

IS-V-26 - Vacant Lot
LA 180sqm
Valley Homes, Patul, Santiago City
vacant residential lot
Min. Bid Price: P 135,000

IS-V-27 - Vacant Lot
LA 180sqm
Valley Homes, Patul, Santiago City
vacant residential lot
Min. Bid Price: P 135,000

IS-V-28 - Vacant Lot
LA 453sqm
Patul road cor. Espiritu st., Plaridel, Santiago City
vacant residential lot
Min. Bid Price: P 374,000

IS-V-29 - Vacant Lot
LA 434sqm
Patul road cor. Espiritu st., Plaridel, Santiago City
vacant residential lot
Min. Bid Price: P 358,000

IS-V-30 - Vacant Lot
LA 445sqm
Patul road cor. Espiritu st., Plaridel, Santiago City
vacant residential lot
Min. Bid Price: P 367,000

IS-V-31 - Vacant Lot
LA 412sqm
Ramos, Santiago City
vacant residential lot
Min. Bid Price: P 170,000

ANTIPOLO

PARK-AV-1 - Vacant Lot
LA 446sqm
Lot 7 Block 13 Parkridge Estates
Residential vacant lot
Min. Bid Price: P 602,100

PARK-AV-2 - Vacant Lot
LA 493sqm
Lot 3 Block 13 Parkridge Estates
Residential vacant lot
Min. Bid Price: P 665,550

PARK-AV-3 - Vacant Lot
LA 365sqm
Lot 4 Block 13 Parkridge Estates
Residential vacant lot
Min. Bid Price: P 547,500

PARK-AV-4 - Vacant Lot
LA 475sqm
Lot 5 Block 13 Parkridge Estates
Residential vacant lot
Min. Bid Price: P 641,250

PARK-AV-5 - Vacant Lot
LA 404sqm
Lot 6 Block 13 Parkridge Estates
Residential vacant lot
Min. Bid Price: P 606,000

PARK-AV-6 - Vacant Lot
LA 399sqm
Lot 8 Block 13 Parkridge Estates
Residential vacant lot
Min. Bid Price: P 598,500

PARK-AV-7 - Vacant Lot
LA 476sqm
Lot 9 Block 13 Parkridge Estates
Residential vacant lot
Min. Bid Price: P 642,600

PARK-AV-8 - Vacant Lot
LA 407sqm
Lot 11 Block 13 Parkridge Estates
Residential vacant lot
Min. Bid Price: P 610,500

PARK-AV-9 - Vacant Lot
LA 413sqm
Lot 12 Block 13 Parkridge Estates
Residential vacant lot
Min. Bid Price: P 619,500

PARK-AV-10 - Vacant Lot
LA 421sqm
Lot 13 Block 13 Parkridge Estates
Residential vacant lot
Min, Bid Price: P 568,350

PARK-AV-11 - Vacant Lot
LA 414sqm
Lot 14 Block 13 Parkridge Estates
Residential vacant lot
Min. Bid Price: P 621,000

PARK-AV-12 - Vacant Lot
LA 419sqm
Lot 15 Block 13 Parkridge Estates
Residential vacant lot
Min. Bid Price: P 565,650

PARK-AV-13 - Vacant Lot
LA 414.5sqm
Lot 16 Block 13 Parkridge Estates
Residential vacant lot
Min. Bid Price: P 621,750

PARK-AV-14 - Vacant Lot
LA 412sqm
Lot 17 Block 13 Parkridge Estates
Residential vacant lot
Min. Bid Price: P 618,000

PARK-AV-15 - Vacant Lot
LA 406sqm
Lot 18 Block 13 Parkridge Estates
Residential vacant lot
Min. Bid Price: P 609,000

PARK-AV-16 - Vacant Lot
LA 401sqm
Lot 19 Block 13 Parkridge Estates
Residential vacant lot
Min. Bid Price: P 601,500

PARK-AV-17 - Vacant Lot
LA 425sqm
Lot 20 Block 13 Parkridge Estates
Residential vacant lot
Min. Bid Price: P 637,500

PARK-AV-18 - Vacant Lot
LA 409sqm
Lot 21 Block 13 Parkridge Estates
Residential vacant lot
Min. Bid Price: P 613,500

PARK-AV-19 - Vacant Lot
LA 465sqm
Lot 22 Block 13 Parkridge Estates
Residential vacant lot
Min. Bid Price: P 697,500

PARK-AV-20 - Vacant Lot
LA 403sqm
Lot 23 Block 13 Parkridge Estates
Residential vacant lot
Min. Bid Price: P 604,500

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Kin of victims in Masbate sea tragedy seek compensation

LEGAZPI CITY—"WE SPENT ALmost P40,000 for the wake of my father. The coffin cost P35,000. They said they would shoulder all the expenses but they only gave us P13,000," Annabelle Magdaraog told the Inquirer in a mobile phone interview.

Annabelle is among relatives of victims of the M/B Mae Ann tragedy, which cost the lives of 27 passengers at the height of typhoon Caloy, who are now in the dark on how to claim compensation from the boat's owner, the Lobrigo Shipping Lines (LSL).

Annabelle is the eldest daughter of Wilfredo Magdaraog, the inspector of the boat Mae Ann 5 which sank less than a mile away from the Masbate port at Barangay Kinamaligan at 2:30 a.m. on May 12 at the height of Typhoon Caloy.

Lt. Edgar Boado, station commander of the Philippine Coast Guard in Masbate, said the boat hit a motorized banca as it was about to pull back and was engulfed by big waves.

Anabelle added that the LSL management promised them P50,000, setting aside its first promise to shoulder all their expenses for the wake and burial of her father.

"The P50,000 was all they wanted to give even if my father was an employee of their company. They also hadn't been releasing money for my father's SSS [account]," Annabelle complained.

LSL owner Nestor Lobrigo and boat captain Rudy Enepequis were absent during the hearing scheduled by the Maritime Industry Authority at the Marina regional office at 2 p.m. on June 6 prompting the office to reset it to June 23.

Nelson Ramos, Lobrigo's legal counsel, said his client failed to appear in the hearing because he was under medication in Manila due to hypertension, which, he said, was caused by the stress brought about by the Mae Ann's sinking.

However, Annabelle said the real reason for Lobrigo's absence was that he wanted to escape responsibilities.

"He was just pretending to be sick and he could not be in Manila for medication because yesterday he was here in Pilar, Sorsogon (where Lobrigo is a councilor). He really just didn't want to face people who might remind him of his forgotten obligations," Annabelle said.

The INQUIRER tried to get the side of Ramos, being the representative of Lobrigo in the postponed hearing, but he refused to be interviewed, saying they did not have the time as they were catching up the last boat trip to Masbate City.

Marina regional director Lucita Madarang said if the principal respondents still failed to appear in the next hearing on June 23, they would base their judgment on their own assessment of the case.

The hearing could have been a venue to clarify the contradicting sworn statements submitted earlier by the survivors and the boat captain.

Madarang said the survivors claimed in their sworn statements that the boat captain did not advise them not to sleep inside the boat during the storm.

Enepequis, on the other hand, claimed that the passengers did not listen when he told them not to sleep inside the boat because it was risky.

He said some of the passengers did not want to leave the boat for fear of losing their paid seats, while some claimed they could not afford to lodge somewhere else till the storm was over," Madarang said.

The Philippine Coast Guard in Masbate City has filed a criminal case of gross negligence resulting in multiple homicide against Enepequis.

Madarang said Enepequis was directly accountable for the passengers' safety in the freak accident.

"If Enepequis is proved to be guilty of negligence of duty, we will cancel his boat captain license and the franchise of the Lobrigo Shipping Lines," she said.

The Mae Ann 5 sank near the shore when it was being maneuvered away from the M/B Morifan.

Madarang said initial findings also showed that many passengers died because they were trapped inside the capsized boat, whose exits were closed because of the storm.

Some of the passengers were also sleeping when the accident happened, which might have caused them to panic when they woke up submerged in sea waters. *Ephraim Aguilar, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

FLAGLETS
Instead of being in school, this young vendor walks the streets of Quirino Ave., in Davao City selling flaglets in time for the celebration of Independence Day today.
BING GONZALES / PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

NAP TIME
A man falls asleep at the foot of the Cathedral stairs in Baguio City. TOOT SOBERANO /PDI BAGUIO CITY

Court blocks Bugkalot vice mayor's suspension

BAYOMBONG, NUEVA VIZcaya—A local court on June 5 blocked the suspension imposed by the provincial board on the vice mayor of Alfonso Castañeda town.

Judge Fernando Flor of the regional trial court branch 28 here ordered the Department of the Interior and Local Government to implement his ruling preventing the six-month suspension of Vice Mayor Jerry Pasigian, a tribal leader of the Bugkalot.

Flor issued the injunction order after the court ruled that the provincial board did not follow due process in meting out the penalty against Pasigian.

The judge said the original copy of the resolution, which recommended the suspension, was "deliberately" not dated.

The provincial board, in a resolution, suspended Pasigian for six months as penalty for charges of abuse of authority, after he presided over a special session supposedly without prior notice to other members of the town council.

In a subsequent hearing, it was revealed that the resolution was promulgated on Feb. 8, from which the period within which Pasigian could appeal the decision was to be counted.

"The court is of the belief that the non-dating of the decision and its promulgation on Feb. 8, 2006, was meant to railroad the decision against [Pasigian] for him to lose the right to appeal," the court said.

Pasigian described the charges and the suspension order as "political harassment."

The suspension, Pasigian said, was meant to prevent him from exposing the alleged plunder of the town's funds, which were derived from the real property tax payments of the Casecnan Multi-Purpose Irrigation and Power Project, amounting to about P110.6 million.

DILG provincial director Dr. Luis Danao said he would serve the court order in Alfonso Castañeda and supervise the reinstatement of Pasigian on June 7.

Pasigian, through his lawyer, Virgil Castro, assailed the supposed refusal of the members of the provincial board to recall the suspension order.

Vice Gov. Jose Gambito said the writ of injunction had "no basis in fact [and] in law."

Gambito, the board's presiding officer, said Pasigian might be "barking up the wrong tree" in blaming the board for not recalling the suspension order.

"We have already lost jurisdiction over the case after [the suspension order] was implemented. We have no power to force the governor to implement the order; neither do we have the power to have it recalled," he said.

"The court orders us to desist from acting on the case, which is what we are doing," Gambito said. *Melvin Gascon, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Robbers kill 78-year-old Briton in Davao City

DAVAO CITY—A 78-YEAR-OLD British national was stabbed to death in Catalunan Grande here by two robbers who entered his house on Saturday, the police said.

Chief Insp. Matthew Baccay, Talomo Police station chief, said one of the suspects, identified as Jonathan Dinglasa, had been arrested shortly after the incident.

Baccay said based on investigation, they learned that Derick Keith Whitehouse was aroused from sleep when he heard a noise around 3 a.m. He then went out to check it.

He said he saw two men, who had entered the house.

After stabbing the victim, the suspects fled but the victim's wife, who heard the commotion managed to identify them.

Dinglasa is now in jail, and faces charges for robbery with homicide.

The other suspect was still being hunted down. *Dennis Jay Santos, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Top NPA leader in Leyte nabbed

By Joey A. Gabieta
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—THE TOP commander of a New People's Army unit operating in Southern Leyte and western part of Leyte was captured by members of the Army's 43rd Infantry Battalion last week, the military announced Saturday.

Glecerio Roluna, 43, was present to local journalists by Maj. Gen. Bonifacio Ramos, commanding officer of the 8th Infantry Division based in Catbalogan, Samar, at the Army's liaison office in Barangay San Jose, this city.

"This is a major blow to the enemy as no less than a top official was captured by soldiers," Ramos said as the handcuffed rebel leader stood behind him with two uniformed soldiers.

Also present during the media presentation was Col. Mario Lacurom, head of the 43rd IB based in Barangay Hibud-Hibud, Sogod, Southern Leyte.

Ramos claimed that Roluna was the commander of the "Evelyn Dublin Terrorist Command," which operates in Southern Leyte and the western part of Leyte.

He was also allegedly a member of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) Regional Party Command.

Roluna was arrested on June 4 at around 7 a.m. in the house of one Marcelo Laresma in Barangay Lungsod Daan, Padre Burgos town in Southern Leyte.

The arresting team, led by Col. George Gaston, learned of Rolunas presence in the area from some residents, Ramos said. Lungsod Daan is located within the town proper.

The soldiers made the arrest after they ascertained that Roluna was same person listed in the military's Order of Battle, Ramos said.

Roluna did not resist arrest. Taken from him was a laptop computer containing "valuable information" about his group, the military said.

Ramos said the owner of the house was identified to be the provincial coordinator of the militant group Anak Bayan. "This only proves that militant groups are supporting and giving comfort to the enemies," he claimed.

Laresma was said to be not around when the soldiers arrested Roluna.

Roluna faces a string of multiple murder and rebellion charges. A warrants for his arrest had been issued by Judge Absalom Fulache of the Leyte Regional Trial Court Branch 14 based in Baybay, Leyte, on March 10, 2003.

Roluna has been detained at the Army's liaison office here. He will be presented before Fulache's court on Tuesday, Ramos said.

BING GONZALES/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

WOUNDED SCOUT RANGER
A wounded Scout Ranger is brought to the Army Hospital in Camp Panacan in Davao City after Friday's clash between government troops and New People's Army rebels in Barangay Matupi, Talaingod, Davao del Norte. Two rebels were captured.

Human rights group scores arrests of 6 in Quezon

LUCENA CITY—A MILITANT HUman rights watchdog has denounced the alleged arbitrary arrest of six persons, three of them minors, on suspicion of being New People's Army rebels, during military operations in the hinterland villages of Lopez town in Quezon province.

Doris Cuario, chair of Karapatan-Southern Tagalog, identified those arrested as Nonilon Paro, Fernando Torres, Herbert Imperial and three 15-year-old cousins, all of the remote villages of Pisipis and Villa Espina in Lopez.

Army Maj. Jose Broso, spokesperson of the military's Southern Luzon Command based in Camp Nakar here, refuted Karapatan's allegations.

"The arrests and eventual filing of criminal charges against the suspects were all in accordance with the law. It's now up to the court to decide. Beneath their innocent youths and farmer looks, they are actually menacing terrorists," Broso said.

Cuario said Paro, Imperial and Torres had been detained at the provincial jail here since Saturday.

The three minors have been placed in the custody of religious leaders and their parents in Lopez.

The six have been charged with murder, frustrated murder and rebellion before the Regional Trial Court in Gumaca town.

"The innocent civilians were all illegally arrested and accused as members of the NPA after the military suffered losses in the running encounter with communist guerrillas," Cuario said in an interview from Lopez, where she was leading a Karapatan fact-finding team.

On Thursday, government troops discovered an NPA training camp at the boundary of Lopez and Guinyangan towns.

They also found sacks of rice and other food provisions, and rebel documents and personal belongings.

Since Wednesday, two Army sergeants have been killed and two others have been wounded in a running gun battle with NPA rebels in the mountain villages of Lopez. It was not known if the communist rebels had suffered casualties.

Cuario said Paro and Torres were arrested separately on Wednesday while Imperial and the minors were taken while on their way home from the farm in a carabao-drawn cart that same day.

"They were accosted by the military. After subjecting them to intense questioning, they were ordered to load the dead body of a soldier and several backpacks in the cart. But when they arrived at the military camp, the four were again subjected to further intense interrogation," Cuario said.

She claimed the suspects had experienced various forms of mental harassment and bodily harm in the custody of their captors.

Cuario said the soldiers prevented the fact-finding and relief missions of Karapatan and several non-government groups from proceeding to Pisipis and Villa Espina.

"The military men are conducting food blockade in the area. They are also forcing the residents to remain inside the hamlet (military designated) area," Cuario said.

Broso dismissed Karapatan's accusations as all "rehashed." *Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Army men vow to protect Agta folk from loggers

LUCENA CITY—THE SOUTHERN Luzon Command (Solcom) has vowed to protect the Agta tribe in Sierra Madre from harassment and death threats by illegal loggers.

"It's our duty to secure and protect all Sierra Madre stakeholders from the harassment of environmental terrorists," said Solcom spokesperson Maj. Jose Broso.

Army troops assigned in Real, Infanta, General Nakar towns in Quezon and in Tanay, Rizal have been ordered to provide security and protection to Sierra Madre settlers, he said.

Solcom chief Lt. Gen. Pedro Cabuay Jr. also urged soldiers on patrol to be vigilant in monitoring illegal logging operations, Broso added.

Illegal logging in Sierra Madre is being protected by the New People's Army communist rebels.

On Thursday, Leony Buendicho, an Agta leader in the mountain settlement of Sitio Baykuran, Barangay Pagsangahan in General Nakar, told newsmen how her community was being harassed and threatened following a series of successful anti-illegal logging operations in the area conducted by Department of Environment and Natural Resources officials, police, military and the environmentalist group Tanggol Kalikasan (TK).

Buendicho asked for government help and protection.

TK executive director Asis Perez said on Thursday night that two more truckloads of illegal cut forest products were intercepted by members of the DENR National Anti-Environmental Crime Task Force (Naectaf) while about to exit in Tanay from the Sierra Madre.

Perez said he received the report from Nilo Tamoria, director for special concerns at the DENR central office and an official of Naectaf.

Earlier, task force personnel seized about 10,500 board feet of undocumented hardwood lumber from residents of the mountain village of Daraitan in Tanay.

Environment Undersecretary Roy Kyamko, Naectaf deputy head, warned that DENR personnel manning the checkpoints along a road connecting the barangay to the main road in Tanay would have a lot of explaining to do for their failure to stop the transit of hot logs from the mountain range.

Sierra Madre has been declared a protected area under Proclamation No. 1636. Harvesting of trees and other forest products is highly restricted there and requires special permits from the DENR.

"The ongoing anti-illegal logging operations by the DENR in Sierra Madre are really commendable," Perez said.

He said the campaign would serve as a welcome impetus to a planned multisectoral summit of mountain stakeholders in August.

Perez said the task ahead was providing alternative livelihood to thousands of small-time loggers who depend on the Sierra Madre for subsistence. *Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Village guard killed in attack

MIDSAYAP, NORTH Cotabato—Suspected Moro rouge rebels attacked a paramilitary outpost here on June 4, killing one village defender.

Local police chief Supt. Chino Mamburam said Komo Adam Dauba was killed when 10 armed men stormed a Civilian Volunteer Organization (CVO) base in Barangay Mudsing at around 7 p.m.

Dauba's comrades fought back, forcing the attackers to retreat, Mamburam said.

The attack was an offshoot of a family feud arising from a land dispute, Mamburam added.

The incident has caused mass evacuation and disrupted the start of classes in the villages of Mudsing and Rangaban, both low-lying villages of Midsayap.

Midsayap Mayor Romeo Arania said the land dispute involved police-backed CVOs, whose members are farmers, and an armed group collecting "taxes" from the farmers.

At least five farmers have been killed in attacks initiated by the armed group in the adjoining villages of Mudsing and Rangaban.

Arania said conflict usually erupted during harvests. Residents usually work in the rice fields while their wives carry firearms to repulse attackers, he said.

Soldiers have been deployed in Mudsing. A ceasefire agreement between the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the government, however, has prevented members of the Army's 38th Infantry Battalion from launching offensives. *Edwin Fernandez, PDI M. Bureau*

17 cops, 4 employees face ax for bogus documents

BUTUAN CITY—THE CIVIL SERvice Commission here has recalled the appointments of at least 17 police officers and four other government employees after they were found to have faked their educational qualifications.

CSC-Caraga director Adams Torres said the police officers and the four employees were found to have forged other information.

"The policemen, with ranks ranging from junior police officer 1 to senior police officer 2, were found to be either fake graduates or have bogus eligibility and are, therefore, [not qualified to join] ... the police force," Torres said. He said an order had been immediately issued to recall their appointments.

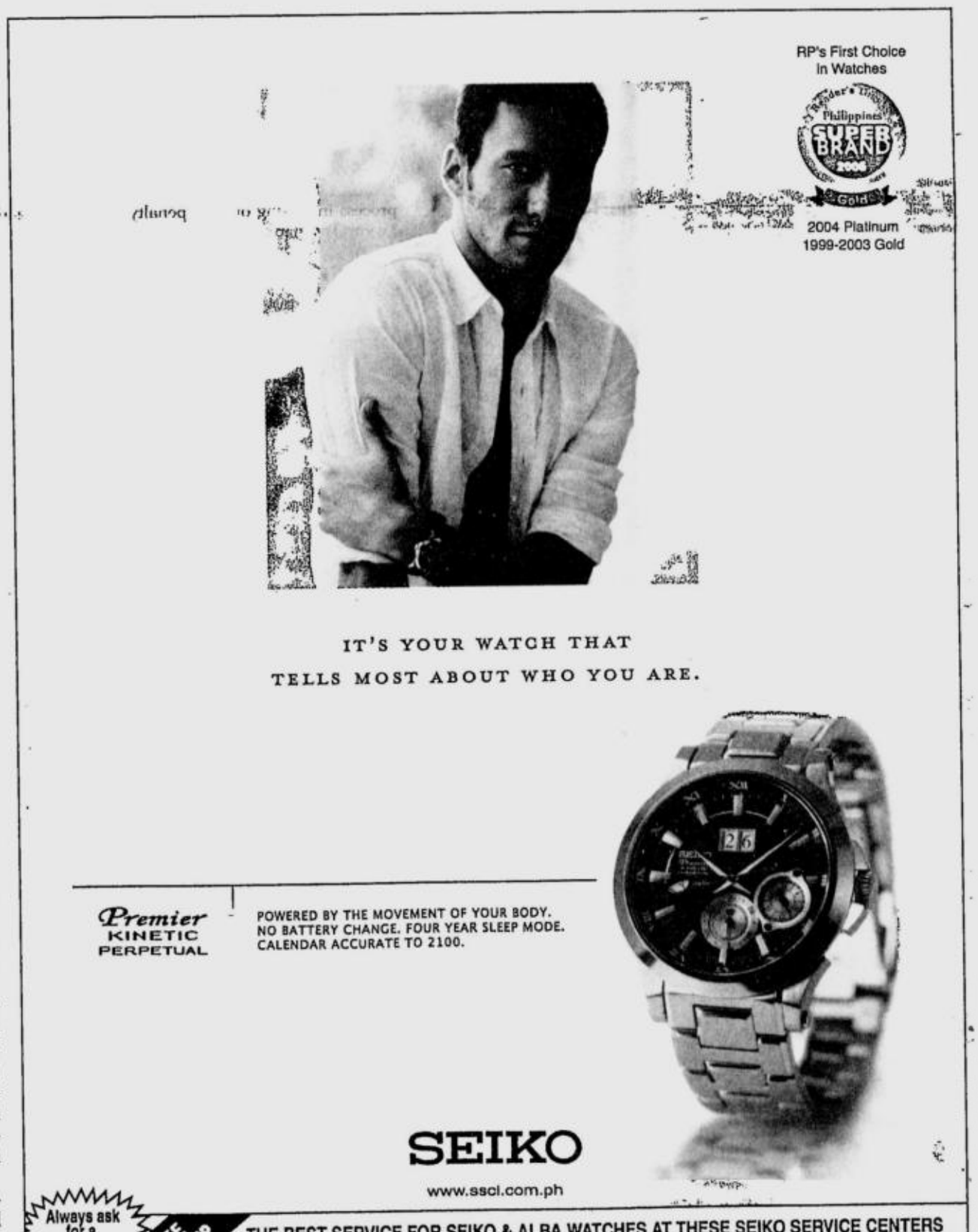
He said the "purge" was part of the CSC's drive under its campaign, "Peke Alis Dyan." The drive was "aimed at cleansing and protecting the merit system of the bureaucracy."

Torres said about 5,000 other employees from various government offices in the four-province region were now being investigated amid doubts on their eligibility and academic achievements.

Torres did not identify the policemen or the other employees whose appointments were recalled, but he said they included a school teacher and a municipal registrar.

He said the CSC had already recommended the dismissal of the erring officers, who, he added, also faced criminal and administrative charges for falsification of documents.

"We hope this would send the strongest message that the CSC does not tolerate fake graduates or those with fake eligibility in the government service," he said. *Franklin Caliguid, PDI Mindanao Bureau*



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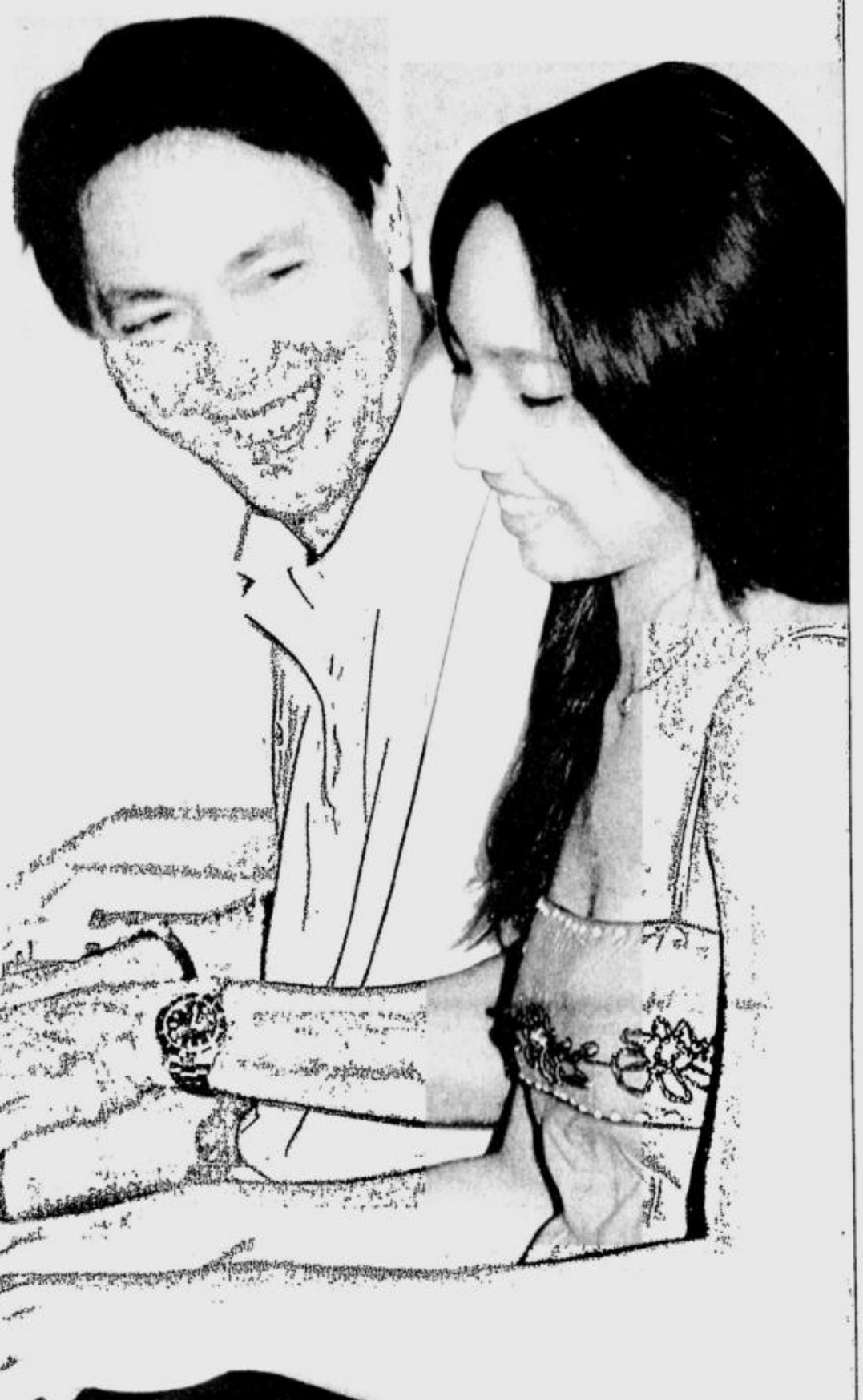

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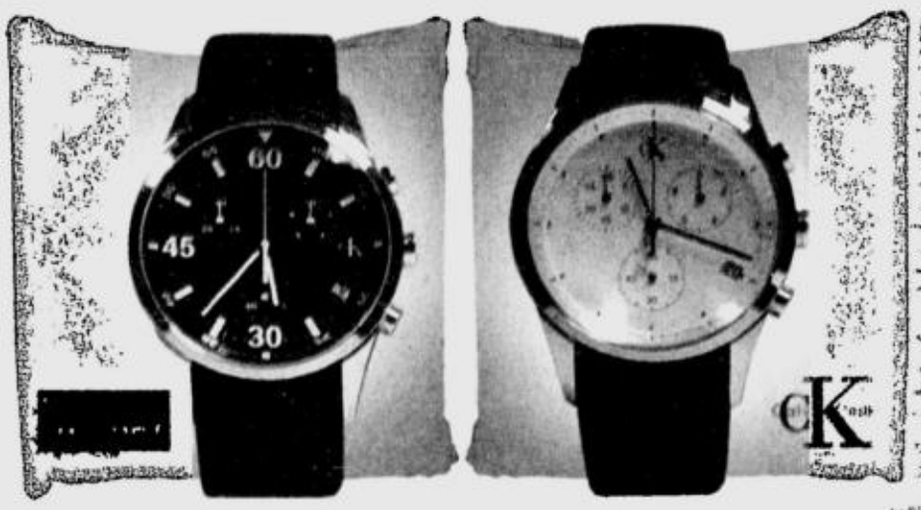

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A tale of two high schools

Araullo, Manila High claim to be city's first public secondary school

By Margaux C. Ortiz

BOTH SCHOOLS TRACE THEIR ROOTS TO A SINGLE illustrious past. But a difference in perspective has led the Manila High School in Intramuros and Araullo High School on United Nations Avenue to hold separate celebrations of their 100th anniversary.

The two schools claim that the honor of being the first public secondary school in the city of Manila belongs to their respective institutions. Both also claim to have been founded on June 11, 1906 as the original Manila High School.

Araullo High School head Angela Ong and Manila High School principal Arnulfo Empleo, in separate interviews with the INQUIRER, agree that their schools have a shared history.

Empleo said the original Manila High School was opened a century ago as the first complete secondary educational institution in the city, and probably, in the country.

"There were also high schools that opened in the provinces during that time, but most of them were not complete in terms of grade levels," Empleo said.

A school for girls

Records and documents Empleo provided to the INQUIRER showed that the Manila High School building, which stands at the corner of Victoria and Muralla Streets in Intramuros, used to house the Escuela Municipal, a girls' school run by the Sisters of Charity, in 1892.

The Spanish authorities later turned the school building into a military hospital when the Philippine Revolution broke out. In 1906, the Americans transformed the medical facility into the city's first public high school, the Manila High School.

"Three former Philippine presidents—Jose P. Laurel, Elpidio Quirino and Manuel Roxas—graduated from the Manila High School," Empleo said proudly.

However, the increasing number of students prompted the local government to establish three more schools that were built "in relation to the Pasig River."

"The Pasig River was a major thoroughfare during that time. It dictated the movement of the metropolis," Empleo explained.

More schools

In addition to the Manila High School, which was renamed Manila South High School, the Manila North, West and East High Schools were established in 1921.

Almost a decade later, the schools adopted the names of four famous Filipino jurists. Thus, Manila South High School became Araullo High School while the other three were rechristened Arellano High School (North), Mapa High School (East) and Torres High School (West).

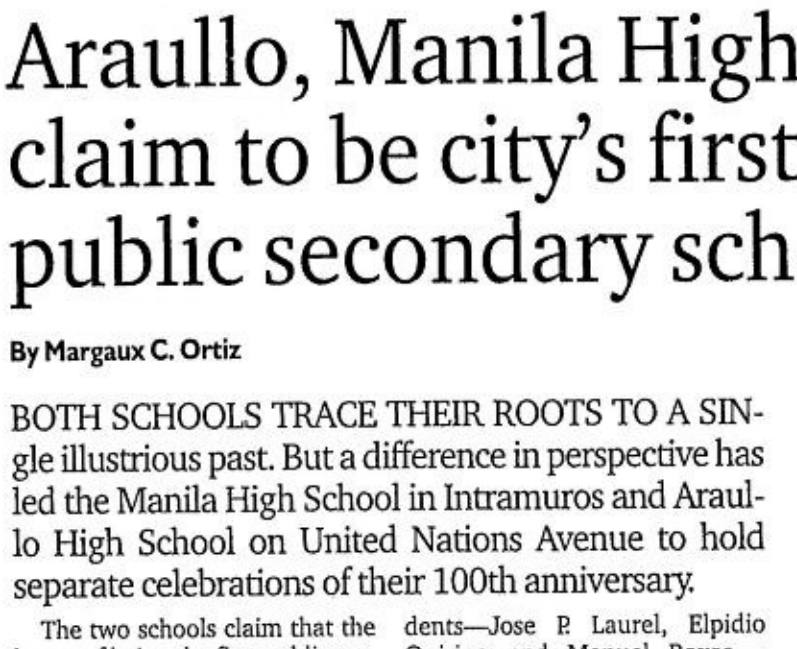
"However, Araullo High School was destroyed during the World War II bombing of Intramuros," Ong explained. She said that when schools reopened in 1946, Araullo High School initially held classes in Quonset huts in Singalong, before relocating to the Lukban Elementary School. The school was later moved to the Bordner Building in Padre Faura.

Later on, Araullo High School

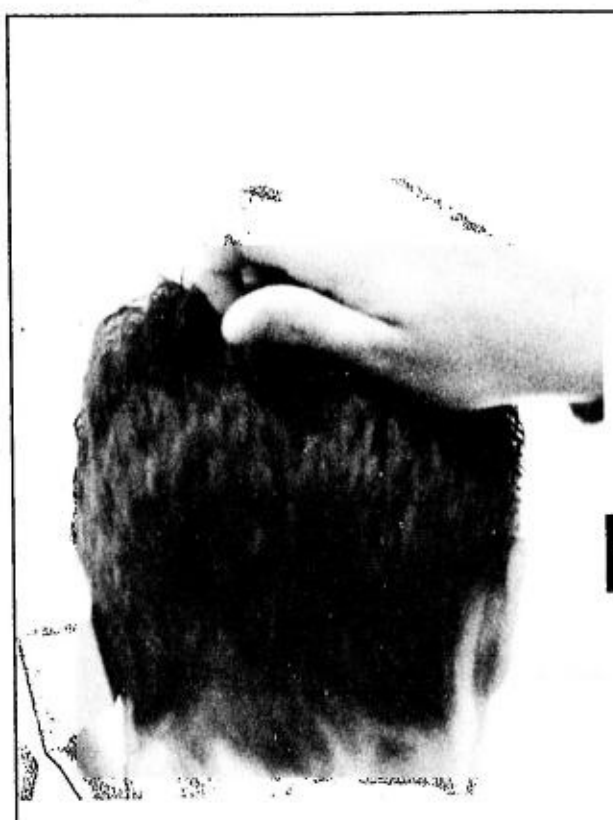
A TALE/ A26

WHAT'S INSIDE

- QC gov't celebrates Freedom Day with jobs fair /A26
- Police bus bombed in Quezon City; none hurt /A26



THE ARAULLO High School on United Nations Avenue and the Manila High School in Intramuros. Which one is the original Manila High School? RODEL ROTONI



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Police bus in QC bombed

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr. and Luige A. del Puerto

TWO POLICEMEN WERE SIPPING coffee in a small canteen at around 5:40 a.m. yesterday when they suddenly heard an explosion.

SPO1 Jeffer Butawan, 39 and PO2 Reyme Custodio, 31, ran outside and saw the National Capital Region Police Office Bus parked at the corner of Commonwealth and University Avenues in Quezon City, in flames.

The white bus converted into a satellite police precinct, had been bombed.

The glass windows of the satellite precinct were all shattered, with the front and rear windshields broken. There was also a hole in one side of the bus.

Empty

Fortunately, no one was inside when the incident occurred. Butawan and Custodio, who were on duty at that time, said they had left the bus, which was parked on the side of the road leading to the University of the Philippines-Diliman, to have coffee at a nearby canteen in UP Bliss.

Ten minutes later, they heard the explosion.

PO2 Leo Nino Pasco, case investigator, said the culprits could have dropped the bomb inside the bus through one of the open windows.

The bomb then fell on a seat on top of the gas tank. When it exploded, it left a crater measuring more than three feet across, a report from the City Explosives and Ordnance Division said.

Big hole

It also tore a hole measuring 17 inches in diameter on one side of the bus and wrecked the vehicle's interior.

"We did not see anyone go near the bus nor were there any suspicious cars parked within the area (while we were still there)," Butawan and Custodio told investigators.

"Those behind this just wanted to scare people. They did not intend to hurt anyone," Quezon City Police District director Chief Supt. Nicasio Radovan, who rushed to the area with NCRPO Director Vidal Querol yesterday, said.

Radovan said the culprits used a "low explosive substance" poured into a "plastic container" and equipped with a "nonelectric blasting cap."

Comparison, analysis

The city police have brought the evidence to the Philippine National Police Crime Lab and the US Embassy for analysis. It will also be compared to materials used in previous bombing incidents in the metropolis to search for any pattern or similarities.

The police bus was stationed in the area more than a year ago as part of a campaign by the NCRPO to thwart street crimes.

Radovan said that the satellite police precinct was successful in deterring crimes that when he decided to move it elsewhere, villagers asked him to bring it back.

However, the police bus was also the subject of a few complaints as some residents said it caused traffic in the area, some policemen said.

"It first came to our mind that it might have something to do with Independence Day, but we cannot find any connection as of now," Metro Manila intelligence chief, Senior Supt. Felipe Rojas Jr. said.

Police in the metropolis have been on full alert since Friday as the country marks its 108th Independence Day today.

"The timing is very critical so it's possible that it has something to do with today's celebration," Rojas added.

There were also reports later in the day of another bombing, this time at the Jones Bridge in Manila, although the police said no such incident took place.

A POLICE prober searches for parts of the bomb inside the bus. RAFFY LERMA

A tale of two high schools

From page A25

had to put up annexes to accommodate its growing student population. One annex established at the Mehan Gardens later became the Manuel Roxas High School.

In 1958, the Municipal Board of Manila resolved to revive the original Manila High School. Thus, the Manuel Roxas High School annexes in Mehan, Featі and Intramuros became Manila High School.

"A few years later, the other annexes of the Manila High School were abandoned and only the building on Muralla Street (the school's current site) remained," Empleo said.

New location

Araullo High School, on the other hand, eventually moved to Isaac Peral Street, now United Nations Avenue.

But this is where the schools' shared history ends and where the two officials' contrasting opinion on which of their schools is the original Manila High School begins.

"Manila High School, throughout history, assumed several identities. But it remains the first public secondary school with a glorious past," Empleo said.

He stressed, "Araullo High School was never directly related to the original Manila High School. It came about when the Manila South High School was renamed."

Ong, on the other hand, maintained that the Manila High School was "created by virtue of a municipal ordinance."

"The Manila High School then is the Araullo High School now," Ong stressed. "Where were they from 1921 to 1953?" she said, referring to her school's "rival."

Two markers

Both principals stressed that proof of their claim lie in historical markers issued to their schools by the National Historical Institute.

Although they have lined up separate yearlong activities, the officials of both schools declared that they are amenable to a joint celebration.

"They can celebrate with us because sometime in the past, they were part of Manila High School. It would be better if we could work these things out and later agree to a single centennial celebration," Empleo added.

Ong agreed, saying that the schools have a common history after all.

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FREEDOM from poverty or "Kalayaan mula sa kahirapan" will be the theme as the Quezon City government celebrates Independence Day today..... A job fair, a cultural show and a wreath-laying ceremony are just some of the activities that will be held as the city marks the 108th year of the country's independence. Led by Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr., the program will begin with a flag-raising ceremony followed by the laying of wreaths at the foot of Dr. Jose Rizal's statue at Quezon City Hall. After the ceremonial opening of the Independence Day celebration, a job fair will be held from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the City Hall covered walkway. Special ceremonies will also be simultaneously held in five historical sites in Quezon City. These are Banlat Road, Tandang Sora (Tandang Sora's birthplace), the Pugad Lawin Shrine in Project 8, the Gen. Geronimo Shrine in Bagong Silangan and the Andres Bonifacio Monuments in Balintawak and Novaliches.

DJ Yap

Busy day for cops

MEMBERS of the Eastern Police District are gearing up for a busy day today as the country celebrates its 108th Independence Day. After a wreath-laying ceremony at the Pinaglabanan Shrine in San Juan in the morning, the police will be getting ready for any antigovernment rallies set to be held in the eastern part of Metro Manila. The EPD has jurisdiction over the cities of Mandaluyong, Pasig, Marikina and the town of San Juan, an opposition bailiwick. "We will deploy our Civil Disturbance Management Team to the Edsa Shrine, just in case some protesters would attempt to hold a rally there," Chief Supt. Charlemagne Alejandrino, EPD director, said.

Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

Oplan Jologs set

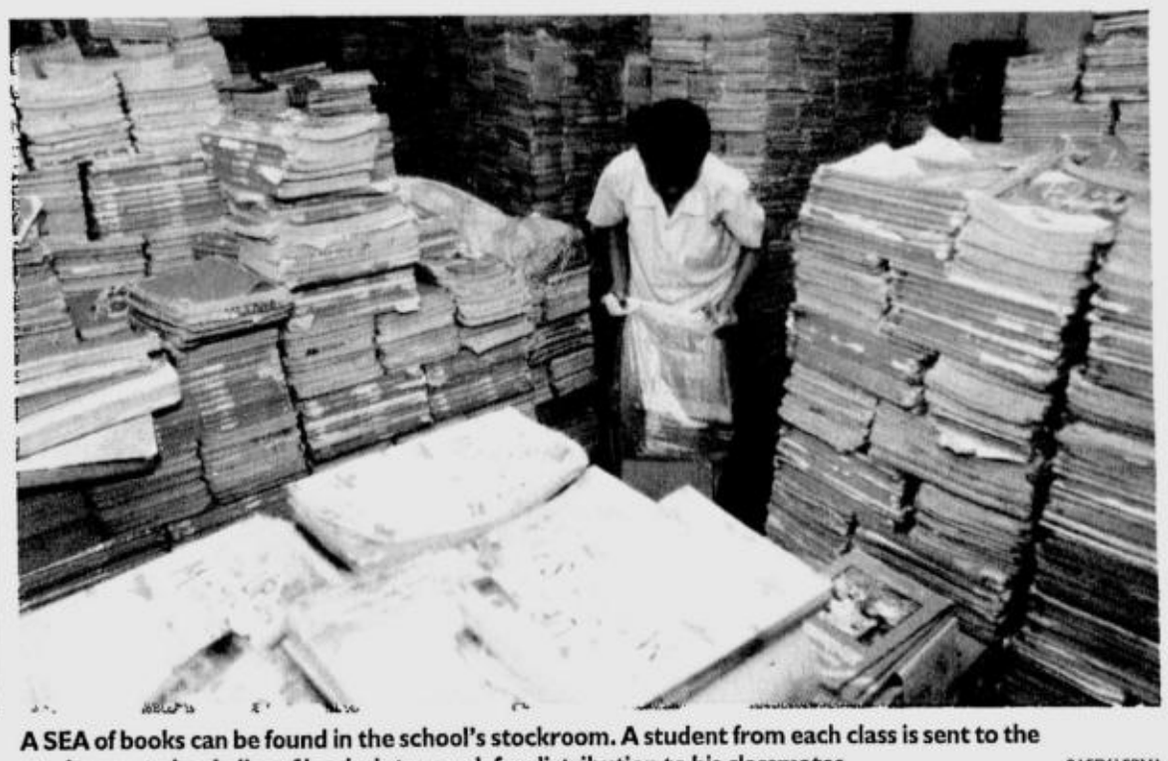
AT LEAST 10 main roads in Navotas are set to undergo a major facelift as Mayor Toby Tiangco ordered the implementation of "Oplan Jologs" (Just Obey our Laws On Good Manners on Streets) beginning next week. Tiangco said Jologs aims to ensure the full use of streets, sidewalks and public facilities by clearing these of illegal structures and obstructions. The areas covered by the program are C-3 Road, North Bay Boulevard (Agora Market), C-4 Road, M. Naval corner Santiago Street, Los Martires Street, A. Dela Cruz corner M. Naval, F. Pascual Street, A. Leongson corner Gov. Pascual, P. Gabriel Street and Santiago corner Gov. Pascual Street. Tiangco also ordered the immediate repair of damaged roads, canals and sidewalks.

High-tech art

HIGH technology and art come together in a two-woman art exhibit featuring Popi Primadewi, an artist from Indonesia, and Alma Quinto, a Filipino. The art show will feature a mix of handmade craft and cellular phone technology. With the Philippines described as the "text messaging capital" of the world, Popi will utilize SMS technology to collect answers to the question "Malaya Ka Ba?" (Are you free?)—a theme timed with the celebration of Independence Day today. The public is encouraged to text their responses through 0915-469 6360 or 0928-6339263. Popi will screen the text messages during the show's opening today in the Liongoren Gallery at 111 New York St., Cubao, Quezon City, starting at 6:30 pm. Gallery goers can also sew on their answers on an interactive and collaborative tapestry which will be created by Quinto. The exhibit will run until June 27. For details, call 9124319 or email maydatuln@gmail.com, popi_yk@yahoo.co.id, and nliongoren@yahoo.com.

WITH just 85 classrooms for the school's 12,000 students, every available space is converted into a classroom, even corridors and halls.

PHOTOS BY RAFFY LERMA



A SEA of books can be found in the school's stockroom. A student from each class is sent to the stockroom to load piles of books into a sack for distribution to his classmates.

RAFFY LERMA

'We're like a family'

By DJ Yap

WITH 12,000 PUPILS CRAMMED INTO JUST 85 classrooms, it is easy to spot the problems faced by officials, teachers and students at the Commonwealth Elementary School on Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City.

One of the largest elementary schools in the world and the biggest in the Philippines, the CES sits in the midst of a bustling squatter colony in Barangay Commonwealth—part of the city's second district and considered the poorest and most densely populated area in Quezon City.

Classrooms are cramped and uncomfortable. There are not enough teachers and textbooks. Toilets are often overcrowded, with students lining up just to answer the call of nature. The stench coming from the cubicles is overpowering.

Every school opening, hordes of journalists swoop down on the public school, already half-knowing what story to report: The sorry conditions at CES in particular, and the sad state of Philippine education in general.

Something good and right

But in the midst of all this negativity, there is still something good and right about CES. Hidden within its walls is the story of a community whose members look out for each other.

A young boy, born to a family of scavengers, finds two uneaten hamburgers in a garbage bin and shares it with a dozen classmates who have no "baon" (packed lunch).

A good-natured cafeteria cook feeds malnourished kids with a cup of porridge or noodle soup everyday, often dishing out a generous second, or even third, helping.

These are the kind of stories that Noemi Lazo, the school's guidance counselor, likes to tell others about CES. "The atmosphere here is not one you would find in a private or exclusive school," she says.

Ready to share

"In other schools, many students are snooty or selfish. There's oneupmanship among them. But here, we're a real community. Everyone is ready to share what they can," adds Lazo, who also handles a Grade IV class.

"During recess, if there's one student who has no *baon*, the rest of the class will share theirs, so that he'll end up with more snacks than his classmates," says Lazo. "That happens almost every day," she adds.

"We're like a family. That's one advantage of having so many kids in one class," she tells the INQUIRER.

Considered one of the biggest grade schools in the world, it had a total student population of 12,755 last school year, according to principal Avelina Salvador. (This year's enrollment figure unofficially stands at just below 12,000.)

Big class size

The average class size is 60 to 70 students but some can have as many as 80 to 90, she says.

There are some 250 teachers and 200 classes, spread out in seven buildings. Ten of the classes are held in "makeshift" classrooms or empty corridors and halls serving as temporary lecture areas.

Classes for Grades II, IV and VI are held from 6 a.m. to 12 noon, while Grades I, III and V attend the afternoon shift from 12 noon to 6 p.m., Salvador says.

According to Lazo, one can practically feel the sheer number of pupils at lunchtime when pupils from the morning and afternoon shifts meet at the school gates. "If you're not used to it, you could get caught in the stampede," she jokes.

Same problems

Salvador says the problems facing CES are the same as those confronting nearly all public schools in the country: Shortage of classrooms, buildings, textbooks and teachers.

But at CES, the problems are compounded by the large student population and the gross poverty of many of the students, she says.

Lazo estimates that up to 90 percent of the entire student populace live below the poverty line.

"Most of them are indigent. When I do home visitation, I often have to squeeze into very narrow alleys to reach their shanties," she says.

"When a student misses class, they'll tell me, 'Ma'am, I'm sorry, but I had to peddle 'balut' (duck eggs), or I had to help my mother finish her laundry job," Lazo adds.

Their grades suffer as a result. Last year, CES ranked 95th among the 96 schools in Quezon City in the Department of Education-administered achievement tests, according to Salvador.

No complaints

Lazo, however, notes that the poor conditions at the school, including the lack of classrooms, have not been a subject of complaint among the pupils.

"Being children, they are very adjustable," she says. "Although conditions are harsh here, the atmosphere we try to build is jolly and lovable."

It also helps that the pupils, being no stranger to poverty, can feel empathy for fellow classmates who are poor, Lazo adds. "If one pupil doesn't have a pencil or ruler, you can be sure that a classmate will let him borrow his," she says.

Good kids

"They are good kids," she stresses.

A big number of the pupils at CES are malnourished, since their families cannot feed them regularly, Salvador says.

To address this problem, the school has a feeding program for malnourished pupils, who are chosen based on their height and weight, according to cafeteria manager Lolita Bulloda.

During recess, the pupils are served bowls of porridge or soup for free. "If they want more servings, I would add more. If it's *champorado*, for example, I would pour more milk than usual," she says.

Other pupils, on the other hand, can buy the same bowl or cup for just P4.

Though it is just one meal a day, the program has benefited many pupils, Bulloda points out.

She adds: "One of the parents said she noticed that her child often gains weight while in school and loses weight again when she's on vacation."

One of world's largest elementary schools is also a big, caring community where members share and look out for each other

Shell Makes New Guinness World Record On Fuel Economy

Taylor Couple take on Asia

After having survived the below-freezing weather conditions in Eastern Europe, the Taylor couple switched driving sides as they made their way into Pakistan. The Asian leg of their adventure proved itself to be a challenge on its own, and this was true as they were welcomed into a country of contrasts - Pakistan. Well maintained highways between cities were a stark contrast to what the couple encountered on the rural roads. The suspension and shock absorbers of the car were put to the test when they crossed the rugged roads to make their way into India.

India was yet another challenge. Fuel economy techniques, not to mention driving techniques, were also tested when the couple had to face mountains, jungles, deserts, open plains, as well as a nerve-racking traffic in just one country. Concluding at Chennai, the couple then travelled to the neighbouring Asian country of Thailand where they were able to relax and enjoy some smooth driving.

The end of the Asian leg was nearing when the couple headed off to the last two countries - Malaysia and Singapore. Malaysia's modern capital Kuala Lumpur boasts an elaborate network of roads and enjoyable proper road signage. The couple varied in driving speeds of 30kph in residential areas to 110kph on main highways. Driving down the western side of the country, the Taylors enjoyed the scenic landscapes as they made their way to one of Asia's most advanced economies - Singapore. While the roads were in perfect condition, , traffic slowed them down just like in any busy city as they completed their journey. The end was near as the couple looked forward to the next leg of their exciting road adventure.

The Taylors are close to completing their world challenge with the Asian leg. The ultimate road test of Shell's newest fuel economy formulation clearly shows Shell's commitment to providing everyday drivers around the world with better fuels to achieve greater fuel efficiency no matter where they live and what they drive.

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Diabetes cases skyrocketing

WASHINGTON—THE NUMBER of people around the world suffering from diabetes has skyrocketed in the last two decades, from 30 million to 230 million, claiming millions of lives and severely taxing the ability of health care systems to deal with the epidemic, according to data released Saturday by the International Diabetes Federation.

While the growing problem of diabetes in the affluent United States has been well documented, the federation's data show that seven of the 10 countries with the highest number of diabetics are in the developing world.

China now has the largest number of diabetics over age 20, around 39 million people or about 2.7 percent of the adult population, according to the federation. The groups says India has the second largest number of cases with an estimated 30 million people, or about 6 percent of the adult population.

Other countries have higher rates of diabetes than China or India, but the federation's experts say rising diabetes rates in the large, rapidly industrializing nations are especially worrisome because of the size of their populations. In some countries in the Caribbean and the Middle East, the percentage of diabetic people ranged from 12 to 20 percent; the highest rate was posted in Nauru, an island in the South Pacific.

In some of the world's poorest nations, the disease is a quick death sentence. While Americans can live for many years with the disease, a person in Mozambique who requires injections of insulin can expect to live just a year; in Mali, such people survive about 30 months.

There are many factors driving the growth in diabetes worldwide, but most experts agree that changes in lifestyle and diet are the chief culprits, in addition to genetic predisposition. As developing countries rapidly industrialize, people tend to do work involving less physical activity. At the same time, the availability of food that is cheap but high in calories becomes more common. The combination causes weight gain, which leads to greater risk of developing Type 2 diabetes, the most common form of the disease.

Type 1 is responsible for only 5 percent to 10 percent of cases, and is not associated with behavior, but rather is believed to stem almost entirely from genetic factors.

In either form, diabetes is characterized by high blood sugar levels that result from the body's inability to make or use insulin, which can lead to a host of complications that include kidney failure and blindness. *NYT*

AGAINST OIL DEPENDENCY
A cyclist rides his bike in Ottawa, June 10, as he takes part in the World Naked Bike Ride. The ride is a mass protest against oil dependency. AP

WARRIORS OF JORDAN
Jordanian veiled women soldiers participate in the first military parade since King Abdullah II ascended the throne seven years ago, during celebrations to mark the 85th anniversary of Jordan's armed forces, June 10, in Amman. AFP

UK assailed for marriage erosion

LONDON—THE ARCHBISHOP of Canterbury, spiritual leader of the world's Anglicans, criticized the British government on Sunday for failing to halt the "long process of erosion" which he said was destroying marriage.

Dr. Rowan Williams told the Sunday Times newspaper that government plans to give legal rights to couples who are not married but who live together would add to "a prevailing social muddle" about marriage and its role in society.

"The concept of cohabitation is an utterly vague one that covers a huge variety of arrangements," he told the newspaper.

"As soon as you define anything, you are creating a kind of status that is potentially a competition with marriage or a reinvention of marriage."

Prime Minister Tony Blair's government has ordered a review of the laws governing the rights of unmarried cohabiting couples in areas such as property, child benefits and inheritance.

The Law Commission, the statutory law reform body, has outlined possible changes and wants the public to give its views before the proposals are presented to parliament.

The Commission wants to simplify the law and try to make it fairer for cohabitees. But it says the plans would not give Britain's two million cohabiting couples the same rights enjoyed by married couples who divorce. *Reuters*

N. Korea threatens US over spy flights

SEOUL—NORTH KOREA'S AIR Force Command on Sunday threatened to "punish" the United States for its spy flights over the communist state, recalling the fate of a US Navy plane it shot down 37 years ago.

In a statement carried by the Korean Central News Agency, the air force said that a US RC-135 reconnaissance plane had made flights over its territorial waters on June 6, 8 and 10.

Describing the alleged US espionage flights as "openly crying out for a preemptive attack" on the communist state, the command warned of a possible repeat of 1969, when it shot down another US Navy plane, killing all 31 crew.

"The (North Korean) Air Force seriously warns the US imperialists that it will sternly punish the aggressors if their planes continue illegally intruding into the sky ... on espionage missions," it said.

"They had better not forget the miserable end EC-121 met in the 1960s."

North Korean fighters shot the reconnaissance plane down off the country's east coast in the Sea of Japan (East Sea) in April 1969.

Another US-North Korean incident occurred when North Korea fired missiles at an SR-71 spy plane in August 1981. The "Blackbird" jet was undamaged.

North Korea has been sensitive to US spy flights, with its media citing military sources as issuing a monthly report on US aerial espionage. Sunday's statement was rare in that it was issued in the name of the Air Force Command.

North Korea has claimed the United States is preparing to invade the communist country despite repeated US denials. *AFP*

Afghanistan considers militias

KABUL—UNABLE TO OFFER protection to vulnerable villagers against intimidation by Taliban fighters, the Afghan government says it is considering forming tribal militias to guard the places security forces can't reach.

"The government is not arming these people. They have had arms for generations, and the government is going to register their guns and provide them some earnings in this regard," Abdul Manan Farahi, the Interior Ministry's counterterrorism chief, told Reuters.

The insurgency is in its bloodiest phase since the overthrow of the Taliban government in late 2001, and with thousands more Nato peacekeeping troops being deployed by the end of July, this summer is regarded as a critical period.

But any decision to put irregular Afghan forces into the fray would run counter to a disarmament program that is supposed to finish next year.

The proposal would be discussed with concerned parties—for and against—in coming days, Farahi said.

In the eastern province of Kunar, where US-led coalition forces launched Operation Mountain Lion earlier this year to clear out Taliban and al-Qaida fighters, it has already happened.

"A tribal militia force was formed more than 10 months ago here," Zahidullah Zahid, a spokesperson for Kunar's governor, told Reuters. "These tribal people know the territory far better than the police and army who are sent from elsewhere."

They own their own guns, mostly AK47s, most don't wear uniforms, and they're paid around 4,000 afghanis ($80) a month by the Interior Ministry.

In southern Helmand province, where British troops are stationed, former Gov. Sher Mohammad Akhundzada says he has enlisted several hundred tribesmen. *Reuters*

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Zarqawi trained terrorists to strike outside Iraq

2 years later, many in 'next gen' terrorists dead; rest in hiding

By Paul Haven

MADRID, SPAIN—THEY ROSE up quickly to take up Osama bin Laden's call for jihad, ruthless men in their 20s and 30s heralded as the next generation of global terror.

Two years after they were identified in an Associated Press analysis as Islamic terrorism's young frontline leaders, five of the dozen militants are dead, targets of a worldwide crackdown that claimed its biggest victory with the killing this week of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, al-Qaida's frontman in Iraq.

Manhunts in Asia, Africa and Europe have pushed most of the rest deep underground; they are believed to have found refuge in places like the wartorn chaos of Somalia or the thick jungles of the southern Philippines.

While there will always be somebody willing to take up al-Qaida's call to arms, analysts say the newcomers have fewer connections than the men they are replacing, less training and sparser resources.

And their degree of mutual allegiances—the likelihood that they will seek to avenge or protect each other—remains uncertain as well.

"There are more people popping up than are being put away," said Magnus Ranstorp, a terrorism expert at the Swedish National Defense College in Stockholm. "But the question is whether the new ones have the fortitude to take up the mantle and carry the struggle forward. I don't see that they have."

The 2004 AP analysis named the dozen as frontline leaders, their hands stained with the blood of attacks from Bali to Baghdad, Casablanca to Madrid.

Al-Zarqawi, who sat atop the 2004 list as the biggest threat after Osama bin Laden and his deputy Ayman al-Zawahri, died Wednesday when US forces in Iraq dropped two 500-pound bombs on his hideout northeast of Baghdad.

Tom Ridge, the former US Homeland Security chief, cautioned on Friday that governments can only reduce the risk from terrorism, not eliminate it.

"There will be a successor to bin Laden, as there will be a successor, unfortunately, to Zarqawi," he said in a speech in Paris. "There will be a successor to al-Qaida."

But Ranstorp said it was far from clear if al-Zarqawi's replacement will have the contacts, resources or capacity to match the Jordanian terrorist's effectiveness at the helm of the biggest group of Iraqi insurgent forces.

"I'm not convinced that there is somebody ready to step in and fill Zarqawi's shoes," he said. "There may be, but it will take some time." *AP*

AMMAN, JORDAN—AT THE TIME of his death, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi was still trying to transform his organization from one focused on the Iraqi insurgency into a global operation capable of striking far beyond Iraq's borders, intelligence experts here and in the West agreed.

His recruiting efforts, according to high-ranking Jordanian security officials interviewed Saturday, were three-part: He sought volunteers to fight in Iraq and others to become suicide bombers there, but he also recruited about 300 people who came to Iraq for terrorist training and sent them back to their home countries, where they await orders to carry out strikes.

There have been scattered reports that Iraq had become a training ground, but the Jordanian assessment was the first to offer firm numbers.

Of a number of intelligence experts in the United States, Europe and Jordan interviewed about al-Zarqawi's reach, only the Jordanians offered such a number. But they agreed with the other authorities' overall assessment that he had not yet created an international terrorist network capable of sustaining itself, with no training or financing in various countries.

AN IRAQI woman weeps June 11 at the site of a car bomb blast in Baghdad. Three Iraqis were killed in violence yesterday around Iraq. AFP

The Jordanians have had a particularly strong intelligence focus on al-Zarqawi. Jordanian intelligence operatives were dispatched to Iraq and neighboring countries and ordered on the offensive in what was practically a personal conflict between Jordanian intelligence and al-Zarqawi. Two months ago, Jordanian officials said that they first picked up al-Zarqawi's whereabouts and then were eventually able to confirm the United States' own intelligence, which located al-Zarqawi on the day he was killed.

Al-Zarqawi's international reputation hinged on his brutality and a flair for publicity connected primarily with his operations in Iraq. But recently, as the insurgency became increasingly driven and manned by Iraqis—as opposed to foreigners—al-Zarqawi expressed an interest in spreading his reach globally, in effect challenging Osama bin Laden as the leader of global terrorism.

It appears that at his death, al-Zarqawi had not yet achieved his ultimate goal—transforming his base in Iraq into a worldwide global terrorist outfit. Jordanian officials said that Libya recently did a good job of shutting down the Zarqawi operation there, for example.

"My sense is that the next step might have been mobilizing his recruitment networks to attack Europeans," said Steven Simon, a former National Security Council staff member now at the Council on Foreign Relations. "That's one reason I think his death makes a difference." *NYT*

Iran says some nuke offers unacceptable

TEHRAN—IRAN'S FOREIGN Ministry rejected some proposals from six world powers trying to persuade it to stop its atomic fuel work and said Tehran will offer its own amendments, a ministry official said on Sunday.

He did not specify what changes to the package Iran might seek but Tehran has always rejected the central crux of the proposal—that it should give up enriching uranium. Without a concession on this, the deal will fail.

"We should study the package offered. We should classify it. There are points which are acceptable. There are points which are ambiguous and there are points that we believe should not exist," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hamid Reza Asefi said.

"We have received the package, we should give our views in response to that package and we will offer our proposals," he told a weekly news conference.

Although Asefi's remarks are a strong indication Iran is unhappy with the terms offered, the Foreign Ministry does not have the last word on nuclear issues.

Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has entrusted nuclear matters to the Supreme National Security Council and appointed Ali Larijani as chief negotiator.

Iran has been referred to the UN Security Council, where it could face sanctions, after failing to convince the international community that its atomic scientists are only looking to build power stations and not weapons.

The United States, France, Germany, Britain, Russia and China have agreed a set of incentives for Iran on the condition that it stops making nuclear fuel, something Tehran has repeatedly said it will never do.

Among the incentives, which Western diplomats say include offers of a light-water reactor and a facility for storing atomic fuel, is a very rare US offer to join the European Union's direct talks with Iran. *Reuters*

BEIZHUANG PERFORMER
The headgear of a young traditional Chinese Beizhuang performer is adjusted prior to a performance in this Feb. 11 photo. The folk art of Beizhuang combines music and songs with storytelling, stilt-walking and acrobatics. AFP

WORLDBRIEFS

Huge protest against Spain peace talks

MADRID—Hundreds of thousands of Spaniards rallied in Madrid on Saturday to protest at planned peace talks between the government and Basque separatists ETA and demanded the guerrillas lay down their arms. Draped in Spanish flags and carrying photos of their dead, families of ETA victims joined opposition politicians to attack Prime Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero's plan to end 38 years of guerrilla violence. Survivors of Madrid's 2004 commuter train bombings joined the antigovernment protest and called on Zapatero to probe deeper into the attacks that killed 191 people. "We want to know the truth!" they chanted in the heat of Madrid's Plaza Colon, amidst shouts of "Zapatero resign." A two-year investigation into the bombings ruled out involvement of the armed Basque group but the opposition Popular Party and some victim groups say ETA may have played a part. *Reuters*

Progress in UN Hariri inquiry

UNITED NATIONS—The UN inquiry into the killing of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik al-Hariri on Saturday reported "considerable progress" in its work but gave no indication it knew yet who was behind the crime. The report by the commission led by Belgian prosecutor Serge Brammertz said Syrian cooperation, which investigators previously faulted, was now "generally satisfactory," but it added that continued cooperation "remains crucial." Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and Vice President Farouq al-Shara were interviewed on April 25 in Damascus and both "provided answers useful to the investigation," it said. Earlier reports cited evidence Assad had personally threatened Hariri, while investigators said Shara gave them false statements. Six other witnesses had also been questioned in Syria and more such interviews were planned, along with analysis of the testimony to date, to determine the validity and depth of the Syrian responses, the report said. Hariri, who became a critic of Syria's decades-long domination of Lebanon shortly before his death, was killed, along with 22 others, by a huge bomb in broad daylight on Feb. 14, 2005, as his motorcade traveled along a Beirut street. *Reuters*

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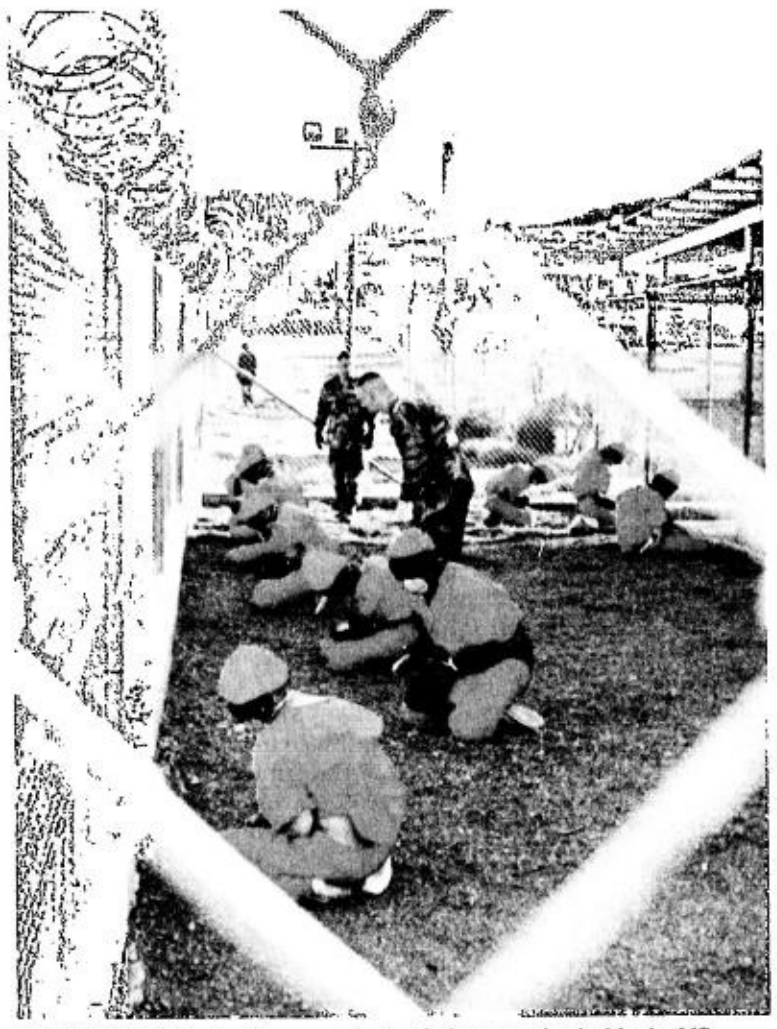


DETAINEES sit in a holding area during their processing inside the US Naval Base Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, in this Jan. 11, 2002 photograph. REUTERS

Gitmo inmates kill selves

3 deaths first successful suicides after repeated tries

MIAMI—THREE FOREIGN PRISONERS WERE FOUND DEAD ON Saturday after hanging themselves with clothing and bedsheets in the first deaths at the US naval base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, since the prison camp for foreign terror suspects opened in January 2002, US officials said.

The military said two Saudis and one Yemeni were found unresponsive and not breathing in their cells by guards shortly after midnight and that attempts to resuscitate them failed.

They were pronounced dead by a physician at Guantanamo, a controversial prison camp that holds around 460 foreigners captured mainly in the US war against the Taliban and al-Qaida in Afghanistan.

Base commander Navy Rear Adm. Harry Harris said the suicides were acts of "asymmetrical warfare" and linked to a "mystical" belief at the camp that it would take the deaths of three detainees for the rest to go free.

The deaths threw a fresh spotlight on the camp, which has drawn widespread criticism of the Bush administration from foreign countries, including allies, and human rights groups.

President George W. Bush expressed "serious concern" when he was informed and US officials immediately made a round of calls to allies, the United Nations and lawmakers on Capitol Hill, White House spokesperson Tony Snow said.

Facing indefinite detention with none of the rights afforded formal prisoners of war, or criminal suspects in the US justice system, dozens of the detainees have undertaken hunger strikes and 23 inmates have also attempted suicide a total of 41 times.

'Desperation for justice'

Of the 460 prisoners being held at the military-run prison, only 10 have been formally charged as terror suspects since the camp opened in early 2002, and none has gone on trial.

Lawyers with the Center for Constitutional Rights, a New York-based advocacy group that represents some 200 inmates and helps private attorneys representing other inmates, were saddened but not surprised at hearing about the suicides.

"These deaths reflect the desperation for a basic human need—a need for justice, a need to have someone hear what they have to say," said the Center's legal director, William Goodman.

Josh Colangelo-Bryan, a lawyer who represents several Guantanamo inmates, quoted one of his clients as saying: "'I would simply rather die than live there without rights.'"

The names of the dead men were not released, so the attorneys said they do not know if they were among their clients.

Opposition to war in Iraq

Guantanamo has been one of the issues that have undermined support abroad for Washington's war on terrorism, declared after the Sept. 11 attacks.

The deaths also come as Bush is facing growing domestic doubts about the war in Iraq, and pressure to quickly find out what happened in the suspected massacre of more than 20 Iraqi civilians in the town of Haditha in Iraq in November.

"These tragic and sad and unnecessary deaths are the latest result of the policies of this administration, which seek to deny justice, fairness and due process to these men," said William Goodman of the Center for Constitutional Rights, a New York group that defends some Guantanamo prisoners.

But Admiral Harris told a news conference the suicides were an act of warfare.

"They are smart. They are creative, they are committed. They have no regard for life, neither ours nor their own. I believe this was not an act of desperation, but an act of asymmetrical warfare waged against us," Harris said.

US officials said there was no indication that the Guantanamo suicides were a reaction to the killing in a US air raid of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, al Qaida's leader in Iraq.

The US military said the bodies were being treated "with the utmost respect." An investigation has begun, it said. The three detainees had taken part previously in extended hunger strikes and been force-fed. They all left suicide notes.

'Entirely predictable'

Bush, who was at Camp David, was told of the deaths by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice at 7:45 a.m.

"Guantanamo has obviously been an issue of some concern," Snow said, explaining the outreach to allies. "I think it's important to make sure that everybody not only knows what happened, but also what the procedures are and have been at Guantanamo, to answer any questions people may have."

Bush has said he would like to empty the detention center.

Ken Roth, head of Human Rights Watch in New York, said the suicides at Guantanamo likely were driven by despair. "Sadly, suicides like these are entirely predictable when people are held outside the law with no end in sight," he said.

In May, the United Nations top anti-torture body told the United States that any secret jails it ran for foreign terrorism suspects, along with the Guantanamo Bay facility, were illegal and should be closed.

The US Supreme Court is expected to rule this month on the legitimacy of special military tribunals set up at the camp to try some of the prisoners for war crimes. Ten detainees face hearings before the tribunals. *Reuters, AFP*

Suu Kyi feeling better after illness

SUU KYI FILE PHOTO

RANGOON — BURma's democracy icon Aung San Suu Kyi was feeling better Sunday after suffering from stomach troubles and remained at home under the care of her personal physician, her party said.

"Her family doctor is taking very good care of her. We are sure of that," said Nyan Win, a spokesperson for her National League for Democracy. "The latest information we have is that by yesterday, she was recovering."

Reports of her illness had on Friday prompted the US Department od State to say it was "very concerned" and call on the country's military rulers to ensure she received prompt treatment.

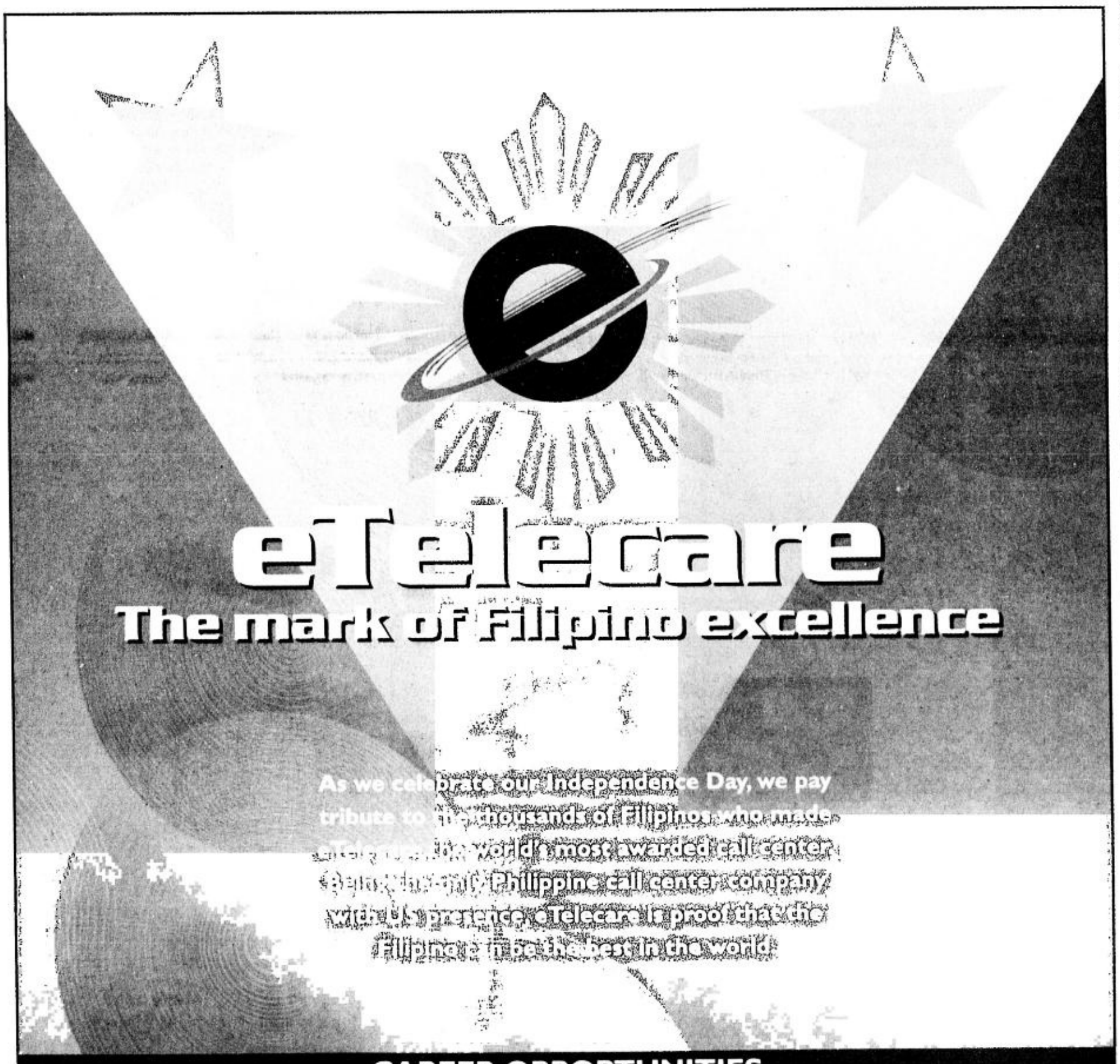
Nyan Win on Saturday said that the 60-year-old Nobel peace laureate had been briefly hospitalized on Friday for treatment.

But on Sunday he said "it was a misunderstanding," and that the party was still trying to confirm whether she had been taken to hospital.

Burma's police chief, Maj. Gen. Khin Yi, said that the doctor had treated her at home Thursday for digestive problems and that she had not left the house.

Aung San Suu Kyi's doctor could not be reached for comment on her condition, but Nyan Win said the physician could still be caring for her inside the lakeside home where she is under house arrest.

The daughter of the country's independence hero Aung San has spent more than 10 of the past 17 years under house arrest, with only a short-wave radio to connect her to the outside world. *AFP*



SPORTS

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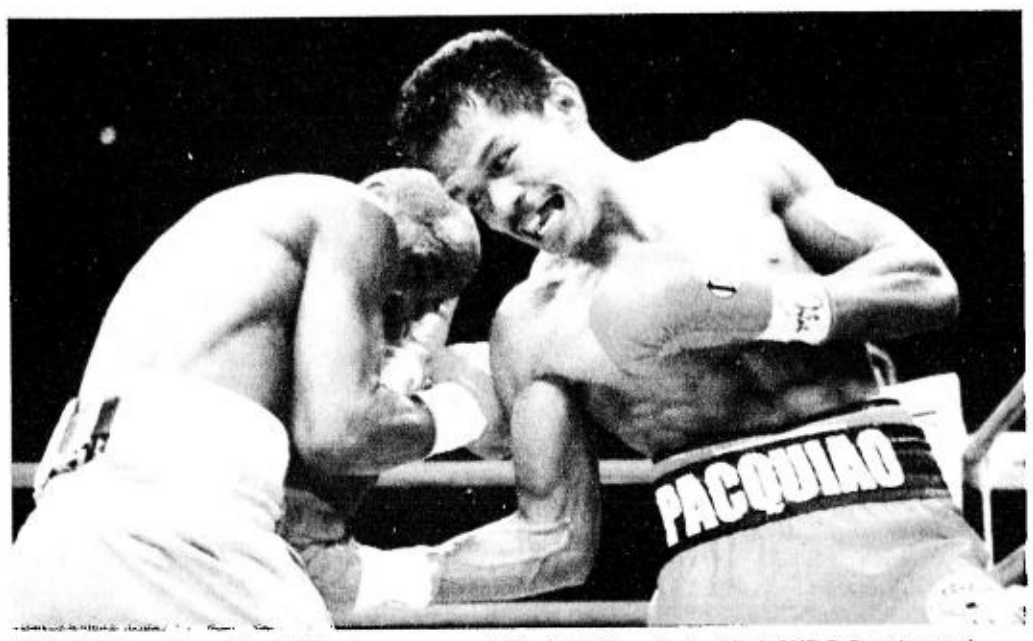


BOBBY Pacquiao of the Philippines pummels Kevin Kelley during their WBC Continental Americas super featherweight title bout. AFP

Pacquiao KOs aging Kelley in 4th round

NEW YORK—BOBBY PACQUIAO OF THE Philippines knocked out New York's Kevin Kelley at 1:24 of the fourth round in another scheduled 12 rounder to retain his WBC Continental Americas super featherweight title before 14,369 at Madison Square Garden.

Kelley, 58-7-2, was down for a four-count when the bell sounded to end the third round after he took a hard left to the chin. Another hard left, this one to the body, sent the former titleholder to the canvas in the fourth.

Even after he was counted out by referee Steve Willis, the 38-year-old Kelley — obviously in pain — remained on his knees for almost 2 minutes. He was knocked out for the fifth time in his seven losses.

The 26-year-old younger brother of the more popular Manny Pacquiao, a two-time world champion now holding the WBC Intercontinental super featherweight title,I improved to 27-11-3 with his 12th knockout.

"Bobby followed our strategy all the way," Mike Koncz, Pacquaio's trainer, said. "We wanted him to go to the body the first three rounds and then take it from there. Everything worked out."

Miguel Cotto of Puerto Rico scored a unanimous 12-round decision over American Paulie Malignaggi to retain his WBO junior welterweight title in the main bout.

Cotto (27-0, 22 KOs) won the showdown between the two unbeaten fighters, opening up a cut over his opponent's right eye in the first round.

The cut bothered the New Yorker for the entire fight, as Malignaggi (21-1, five KOs) apparently had trouble seeing because of the blood. *AP*

POC to stick with Fiba MOU, says counsel

WHILE IT APPEARS THAT THE PREVAILING sentiment in the Asian region is for the lifting of the Fiba (international basketball federation) ban against the Philippines, the Philippine Olympic Committee remains focused on strictly abiding by its Memorandum of Understanding with the world cage body.

POC legal counsel Ding Tanjuatco stressed that the POC is all for the lifting of the ban but will not deviate from the provisions of the MOU signed last year by POC president Jose Cojuangco Jr. and Fiba secretary general Patrick Baumann.

"Of course, the POC wants the ban to be lifted and it (POC) should support any effort towards that direction. But it should be clear to the public that the beneficiary is the Philippines and not any particular party," Tanjuatco said.

The former solon was apparently referring to the Basketball Association of the Philippines, which continues to project itself in the international community as the national sports association for basketball even after it was expelled by the POC last year.

On Friday, BAP president Joey Lina informed media organizations that his association filed a resolution calling for the lifting of the ban against the Philippines that prevents its participation in international tournaments.

This resolution, according to Lina, was supported by Fiba Asia, which will ask the powerful Fiba Central Board when it convenes in August this year.

Meanwhile, the POC, through first vice president Monico Puentevella, yesterday declared that it remains to be the sole authority that will accredit national teams in international competitions like the Asian Games this December in Doha.

Puentevella was reacting to reports that Fiba-Asia has unanimously approved the recommendation to Fiba-World to give back its sanction to the BAP, which has been dropped from the roster after getting expelled by the POC.

"It doesn't really matter if Fiba lifts the suspension on BAP because as far as the POC is concerned, it has been expelled by a vote of 33 associations," said Puentevella. "And everyone knows only POC has the sole authority to accredit national teams in international competitions.

"Mr. Lina is confused and confusing. The MOU did not ask the BAP with anything but merely mentioned its name as a suspended member of Fiba and whose eventual expulsion with Fiba is inevitable upon the acceptance of a new NSA for basketball," Tanjuatco pointed out.

"In fact Mr. Lina or BAP is guilty of misrepresentation. Mr. Lina wants our public to think that the lifting of the ban against the Philippines is tantamount to the lifting of the suspension against the BAP by the Fiba. This is ludicrous because as far as the POC is concerned, BAP does not exist."

Tanjuatco said it is quite preposterous to think that the Fiba Central Board will premise the lifting of the ban against the Philippines on the retention of the BAP as the NSA for basketball.

"This issue was clearly addressed in the MOU and BAP had already exhausted all the legal avenues to advance its selfish interest to be retained as the NSA for basketball. It is worth noting that even the case it filed with our local courts did not prosper. Involving local courts is a contravention of Olympism and even the tenets of Fiba." *With a report from Marc Anthony Reyes*

Tigers nip Aces; Kings go 2-1 up

GAMES WEDNESDAY (*Araneta Coliseum*)
4:40 p.m.—Barangay Ginebra vs. Red Bull
7:35 p.m.—Coca-Cola vs. Alaska

By June Navarro

COCA-COLA PREVENTed what could have been another meltdown in the final possession and lived to fight another day with a 77-75 win over Alaska last night in the PBA Philippine Cup quarterfinals at the Araneta Coliseum.

Willie Miller had two chances to steal the game for the Aces but he fumbled on one instance and rifled a pass that came too late in another, allowing the Tigers to escape with their first win in the best-of-five series.

Trapped underneath, Miller eluded Coca-Cola's umbrella defense and gave up the leather but Tony Dela Cruz, a set shooter, got the pass simultaneously as time expired.

"We tried to forget the series and the outcome. We're fighting for survival and just gave everything we had," said Coca-Cola coach Binky Favis, whose Tigers sliced the series deficit to 2-1.

"I was amazed at how my players responded. Every body was willing to share the ball and good things usually happen whenever we do it," added Favis.

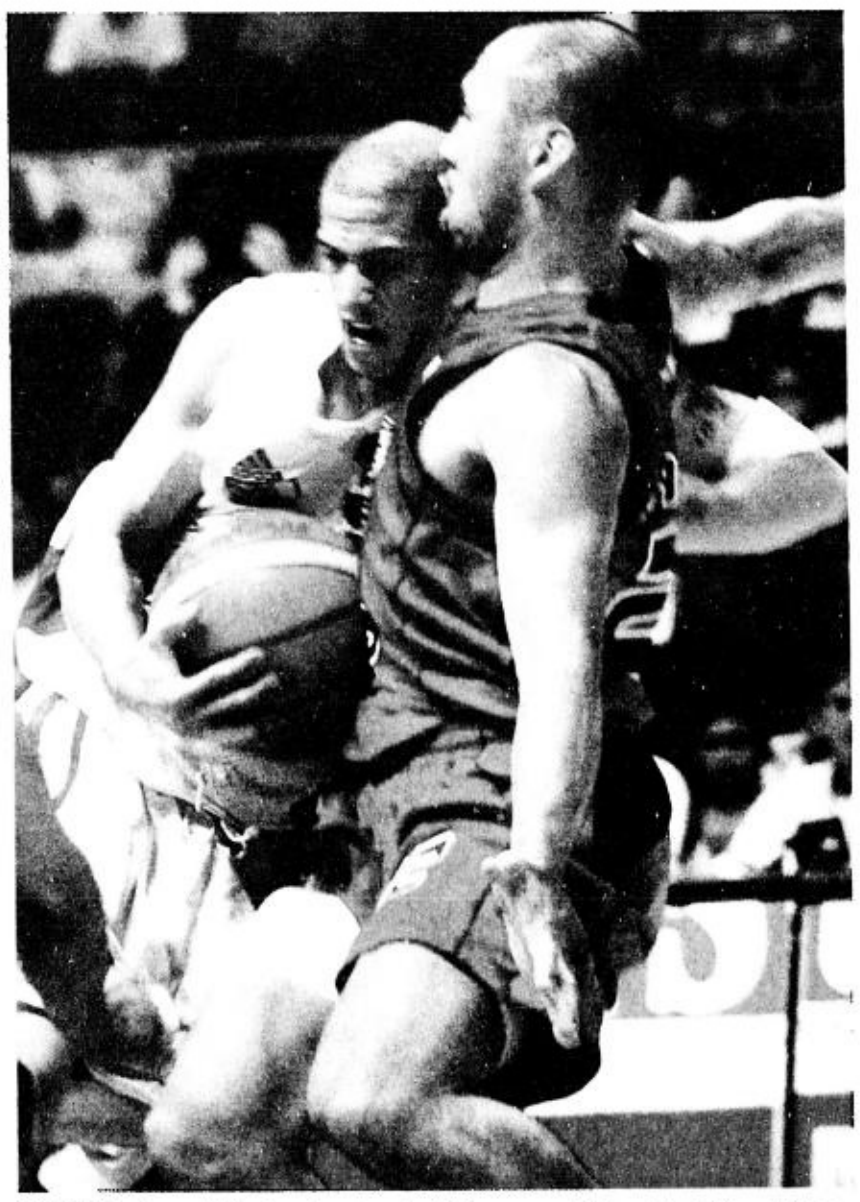
In Game 1, Miller almost lost the ball before sending it to Nic Belasco for the game-winning three-pointer with time winding down.

This time around, Miller was stymied by the Coca-Cola defense.

In the second game, Barangay Ginebra again rode on its unheralded players to carve out a 95-87 victory over Red Bull to take a 2-1 edge in their half of the semifinals series.

Although Erik Menk provided the muscle with 26 points and 14 rebounds, Mark Macapagal and Allan Salangsang chipped in valuable support. Macapagal had 21 points and a huge three down the stretch while Salansang had 12 points and eight rebounds and lofted in an awkward runner in the dying seconds that snuffed the life out of the Bulls.

"It's a good win but we can't take them lightly," said Kings coach Siot Tanquingcen. "It doesn't end here."



JEFREY Cariaso of Alaska plays tough defense on a driving John Arigo of Coca-Cola. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

The scores:

First Game

COCA-COLA 77—Peek 20, Arigo 16, Miranda 13, Antonio 8, Wainwright 5, Reavis 5, Singson 4, Abarrientos 4, Mamaril 2, Capati 0, Francisco 0.

ALASKA 75—Belasco 20, Cariaso 14, Cortez 13, Dela Cruz 9, Thoss 8, Miller 7, Hugnatan 2, Laure 2, Wilson 0, Ferriols 0, Bajar 0.

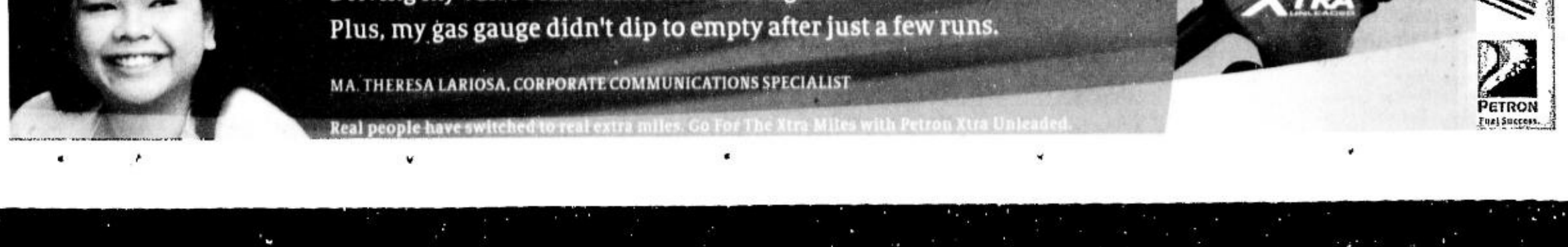
Quarters: 15-19; 40-34; 59-62; 77-75.

Second Game

GINEBRA 95—Menk 26, Macapagal 21, Salangsang 12, Caguioa 11, Echavez 10, Ferreria 6, Sotto 6, Holper 3, Ramos 0, Salvacion 0.

RED BULL 87—Tugade 21, Pennisi 15, Fonacier 11, Villanueva 10, Valenzuela 9, Bagulo 7, Bugia 5, Robinson 4, Alvarez 3, Najorda 2, Cruz 0.

Quarters: 21-18, 41-39, 67-52, 95-87



Carapiet, Stockinger dominate Asian Open

CARMONA, CAVITE—BIREL-SFIC drivers Ivan Carapiet and Marlon Stockinger did their share of celebrating the country's Independence Day today when they pulled off a 1-2 finish in the second leg of the prestigious 2006 Asian Karting Open Championship yesterday at the Carmona Circuit Philippines.

The two dominated the pre-final and final races with Carapiet seizing the checkered flag after sneaking past Stockinger with four rounds left of the deciding 22-lap race.

Carapiet won in 15 minutes 39:256 seconds to claim the prestigious Rotax Max Seniors plum. Stockinger, who finished just 0.064 of a second off Carapiet, settled for the Formula 125 division title.

"I was so lucky. I endured the pain caused by my previous injury and what I had in mind is just to give my all for the country. I really didn't expect to win," said Carapiet, who was still nursing a swollen hand and sore right rib side after a minor accident in a Batangas race a month ago.

Matteo Guidicelli of Alessandra Racing rallied from the tailend at grid No. 22 to claim third place with a time of 15:47.598 in the event sanctioned by the Automobile Association Philippines (AAP) and sponsored by Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp., Denso Iridium Power, Palmer Asia Inc., Yokohama, Vivere Suites, Department of Finance, Philippine Sports Commission and the Department of Tourism.

TEAM Birel Ivan Carapiet (014) trails teammate Marlon Stockinger before grabbing the lead to win the second leg of Asian Karting Open Championship in Carmona yesterday. RYAN LIM

Another Birel-SFIC driver, Daniel Cleak, checked in fourth while Mark Bumgarner bagged fifth.

Javi Benitez of JeT Racing also grabbed the spotlight as he turned back Indonesian top gun Rio Haryanto for the ROK Junior crown.

Benitez finished the 18-lap race in 12:53.830, an impressive 2.307 seconds ahead of Haryanto.

John Alvarez of the Cebu Racing Group clinched third place just 0.357 of a second behind Haryanto.

Cebu Racing Group's Jan Jan Gonzales, a former jetski champ, delivered the fourth gold with his big win in the ROK Seniors class over Toti Turalba.

The other winners are Ecuadorian expat Santiago Garcia (Rotax Max Veterans), Christian Gaddi (Cadet 60 class), Renz Pazcoguin (Mini ROK) and Francis Reyes (Formula SL). The only foreign champion was Sathienthirakul who took the Rotax Max Junior crown.

Torre gains tie for fourth

FILIPINO GRANDMASTER EUgene Torre trounced GM Dmitry Svetushkin of Moldova with the white pieces to forge into a seven-way tie for fourth place after the eighth and penultimate round of the second San Marino International Chess Open Saturday at the Kursaal Congress Centre in Republic of San Marino.

The 54-year-old Torre now has 6 points like his last round opponent top seed GM Sergei Tiviakov of the Netherlands, GM Vladimir Epishin, GM Baadur Jobava and GM Levan Pantsulaia of Georgia, GM Jaan Ehlvest of Estonia and GM Nenad Sulava of Croatia.

GM Varuzhan Akobian of the US, 23, Torre's conqueror in the seventh round, continued his winning ways by upsetting tournament favorite Tiviakov to grab the solo leadership board with 7 points, half point ahead of GM Merab Gagunashvili of Georgia and GM Vadim Milov of Switzerland, who drew their match on the top board.

Top Filipino GM Mark Paragua downed IM Subbaraman Vijayalakshmi of India to lead the huge group of 5.5 pointers along with his last round foe IM Bartlomiej Heberla, winner over countryman WGM Joanna Dworakowska of Poland.

Young RP sensation Wesley So, a 12-year-old Fide Master, put himself in good position to grab his second IM result by drawing GM Pawel Jaracz of Poland and notching 5 points in eight games.

The youngest Filipino to play in the Olympiad plays Italian top player GM Michele Godena in the final round.

NM Rolando Nolte halved the point with GM Stefan Djuric of Yugoslavia to join compatriots and new IM Oliver Dimakiling and reigning national champion NM Darwin Laylo at 4.5 points.

Dimakiling lost to GM Alexander Areshchenko of Ukraine while Laylo bowed to GM Namig Guliyev of Azerbaijan.

Laylo takes on Romanian GM Mircea Parligras while Dimakiling and Nolte tangle in the final round of this nine-round Swiss system. *Marlon Bernardino*

How relevant is the Bobby Pacquiao win?

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

THERE OUGHT TO BE A LEGAL limit to how far overage boxers should be allowed to sell themselves.

Kevin Kelley had bragged that his duel with Bobby Pacquiao in New York yesterday would be his showcase.

Promoters and gullible fans listened and believed every word of what Kelley had to say.

But look what a dismal show Kelley had succeeded in putting on at the storied Madison Square Garden. He clearly demonstrated that over-the-hill fighters should never engage in serious combat. If not in the infirmary, they should be confined at home, to mow the grass or watch over the beef roast.

* * *

Bobby Pacquiao won by 4th round stoppage. Not bad. But, tracing the one-sided action, Pacquiao's feat could be rated exemplary only because of what Kelley had been allowed to lie about himself.

It was more a case of Kelley being terribly soft and shallow than the younger Pacquiao being truly superb.

Kelley was a total contradiction of the fighter he said would manhandle Bobby Pacquiao.

The true Kelley was so wasted and ill-equipped he made Manny Pacquiao's younger brod look as though he was indeed another Pacman in the making.

Not to play killjoy. But based on yesterday's win, Bobby Boy would have a lot of plodding to do to break away from his brother's shadow.

Tests of the Kevin Kelley kind could get merit in a circus, but don't amount to much in world championship boxing.

* * *

Of course, Bobby Pacquiao was not to blame.

He worked hard, he sparred more than the number of rounds needed.

Bobby Boy had every reason to feel rewarded.

But then, he cannot claim he was also fulfilled.

He will have to undergo a series of severe on-ring tests if he's to truly follow Kuya Manny's footsteps.

If anything, Kelley's prefight verbal blasts had incensed and worried a good number of local fight fans.

* * *

At the village fish market yesterday morning, there was common concern among the male vendors, mainly of Visayan descent, on the chances of Bobby Pacquiao against the over-hyped Kelley.

There was also this omen of how a line of Filipino fighters, headed by the great Flash Elorde, had fared miserably at the Madison Square Garden.

There was full awareness among these fight aficionados of Bobby's capacity and this paled terribly against what drumbeaters had succeeded in bragging about the opponent.

Anyway, once informed that Kelley was already too old and should have been sent back to the barn years back, these Pacquiao fanatics turned their concern on the Pacman's next fight.

* * *

Truth is Oscar Larios, previously labeled here as recycled Mexican meat, has also succeeded in projecting himself as a worthy challenger to Manny Pacquiao.

How did Larios do it?

Easy. He did not only belittle Pacman as small and bloated. His handlers also swore Larios was a lot better than Marco Antonio Barrera and Erik Morales, if not better than the two Mexican ring greats combined.

Unfortunately, just like with Kelley, Larios & Co. have sufficiently worried local fight followers.

Which was just fine, as this would be great for the gates.

Just the same, these concerned fanatics were advised that, at the rate things are going, only Pacquiao should be able to beat himself.

If Pacman succeeds in peaking, and develops sufficient stamina despite a shorter training period, there should be no reason to worry.

Pacman could also end up having a picnic of the quality Brother Bobby had against Kelley come July 2 at the Big Dome.

Orcollo, Kiamco in semis

THE PHILIPPINES' DENNIS ORcollo and Warren Kiamco hurdled separate opponents yesterday to remain unscathed in the 2006 Reno Open at the Sands Regency Hotel in Reno, Nevada.

Orcollo turned back Tom Seymour (9-1), Tim Hall (9-5) and Rich Geiler (9-3) respectively, to reach the semifinals where he was joined by Kiamco after beating Paul Juarez (9-4) and Chris Bartram (9-4).

Robb Saez and Bill Ganne were still disputing the last final four slot in the winner's bracket at presstime. Kim Davenport is the other semifinalist.

Saez defeated Deomark Alpajora (9-4) in the fourth round while Ganne crushed Edwin Montal (9-8) in the fifth.

In the loser's side, Canada-based Pinoy Montal posted huge victories against ex-US open titlist Corey Deuel (9-5) and Ian Costello (9-7) to join compatriot Gandy Valle, 1998 Asian games gold medalist from Davao City in the next round. *Marlon Bernardino*

Ongpauco, Clutario lead

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE FOREIGN PLAYERS ARE IN town but they hardly created a ripple in the Masters' action Saturday night of the 35th PBC-Boysen International Open Tenpin championships at the Green Valley Lanes.

Filipinos Tyrone Ongpauco and Liza Clutario continued to pace the men's and ladies' Class O with 246.50 and 234.50 average pinfalls, respectively, which will be challenged by entries from at least five countries, including regional power Malaysia.

United Arab Emirates' Fahad Falah clinched first place in the overseas field with a 216.50 average on lines of 222-280-200-164.

Korea's Oh Young Ki, who had 216.25 on a four-game series of 182-234-239-210, was second and UAE's Adel Al Marzooqi was third with 197 (193-224-205-166).

Bowlers from powerhouse Malaysia, Hong Kong and Thailand were set to plane in last night. The finals of the elite Open class is set on June 17.

Jojo Cañare, the 1997 Southeast Asian Games champion, moved up to sixth place with a 218.50 average even as Liza del Rosario slid to ninth place from sixth with a 217, behind Sheena Go, who stormed into the local field from the mixed pool with an average of 218.5 pinfalls.

In the associate masters, Ceasar Muere was on top of the heap with a 228.50 average, leading 15 others in the local field which included Marlon Sia (221.5), Francis Villaflor (219.5), Joey Velez (219.5) and Tito Ngo (216.25)

INQUIRER executive Garry Libby held his own against the tough field, rolling 165-172-257-180 for a 193.5 average in the associate masters reserve pool.

Making up the Ladies Open Class local pool are 2004 ABF Tour Philippine leg champ Irene Benitez (223) in second place followed by last year's ABF Tour RP leg winner, 17-year-old Apple Posadas (222.75), Holley Josef (221.25) and Elaine Florencio (220.5).

RP golf team slots at stake

VIRAY: Defending champion

THE 2006 PHILIPPINE SENIORS Amateur Golf Championship presented by Harbour Centre will not only be a battle for top honors among the country's golfing elders but also a fight for berths in the national squad competing in this year's Asia-Pacific Men's Seniors Golf Championship.

As defending champion in the Asia-Pacific region, the Philippines will be hard-pressed to come up with a very strong team like the one which bested the best in the region, including fancied New Zealand and Australia, to win its very first As-Pac crown last year in China.

Rolly Viray, Francis Gaston, Iggy Clavecilla, Richie Garcia, Tommy Manotoc, Caloy Coscoluella and Clifford Celdran made up that champion squad and most of them are expected to clash again for this year's crown in the Open division and at the same time lead the chase for slots in the team seeing action in the 2006 Asia-Pacific Men's Senior Amateur golf champion in November.

That should make the three-day event slated June 14-16 at The Riviera, doubly interesting with the Langer course expected to challenge the shotmaking skills and mental toughness of the competing field.

Meanwhile, due to popular request, a separate age-group tournament for players aged 55-59 years outside of the Open category has been added in the event conducted by the National Golf Association of the Philippines and backed by Mizuno, Nestea and Summit mineral water.

Adamson-La Salle up

GAMES TODAY *(Blue Eagle Gym)*
12 nn—San Sebastian vs FEU
2 p.m.—La Salle vs Adamson

ADAMSON WILL HAVE TWO MISsions going into today's game: Beat La Salle and fuel its finals bid. But those, of course, are easier said than done.

The Lady Falcons try to become the first team to beat the Lady Archers when they clash at the resumption of the Shakey's V-League semifinals at the Blue Eagle Gym.

Unbeaten in nine games, La Salle is still heavily favored in the 2 p.m. game. San Sebastian eyes a third straight victory against Far Eastern earlier at 12 noon.

"If we can play solid defense, we have a chance," said FEU mentor Florentino "Kit" Santos. *Marc Anthony Reyes*

Asuncions triumphant Down Under

KENNIE AND KENNEVIC ASUNcion pulled off a pair of come-from-behind victories to capture two crowns in Australia and New Zealand that boosted the top Filipino mixed doubles pair's bid to regain their once lofty place in the world ranking.

Playing with renewed confidence following their surprising runner-up finish in the recent Bingo Bonanza Philippine Open, the Asuncions rallied from a set down to repulse the Aussie pair of Raj Veeran and Renuga Veeran, 18-21, 21-14, 21-17, for the 2006 Ballarat Eureka International Championships in Ballarat, Australia, last June 4.

Sustaining that momentum, the brother-sister tandem then hopped to New Zealand and again flashed the same kind of resiliency they showed Down Under by completing a 17-21, 21-17, 21-13 victory over Daniel and Lianne Shirley, in the 2006 Babolat North Harbour International Championships in North Harbor, New Zealand.

AF3 bets raring to go

RACING STAR DADO PEÑA CAN'T wait to test the new car he will drive in the next three rounds of the Asian Formula Three circuit this week in Guangdong, China, that he says can make him realize his full potential.

Peña, 18, and the rest of the Filipino drivers, among them series leader Tyson Sy, will leave tomorrow for Zhuhai, all eager to test their powerful machines as they gear up for rounds 4 to 6 of the Asian-hopping circuit on June 17-18.

"The new car is ready and it should be quick," said Peña, referring to the Dallara 304 car, the same model that Sy drove to an amazing sweep of the opening three rounds in Batangas last month.

Peña's new car actually arrived last month but the crew of Team Goddard failed to get it ready for the races at the Batangas Racing Circuit.

"It should be properly shaken down by now, everything is running smoothly, and I will drive it with renewed enthusiasm," said Peña, adding he is going for no less than a win.

"During the races at Batangas, we fought all the way with our old model car but we were not able to show our full potential. This time, it will be different," said Peña, who is running fifth in the series with 22 points anchored on his second place finish in the third race at BRC.

Sy, of Speedtech Asia, leads the standings with a perfect 60 points, with series newcomer Dillon Battistini of England, driving for JA Motorsports, running second with 33 points, just a point ahead of fellow Briton and teammate James Winslow.

WORLD SLASHER CUP II
American Roger Roberts, the 2001 World Slasher champion from Georgia (left) and Dicky Lim, the 2006 World Slasher winner, perform the traditional pitting of the cocks while Bb. Pilipinas titleholders Denise Valmonte, Lia Ramos and Anna Igpit look on. The 2006 World Slasher Cup II is set June 13, 15 and 17 at the Araneta Coliseum.

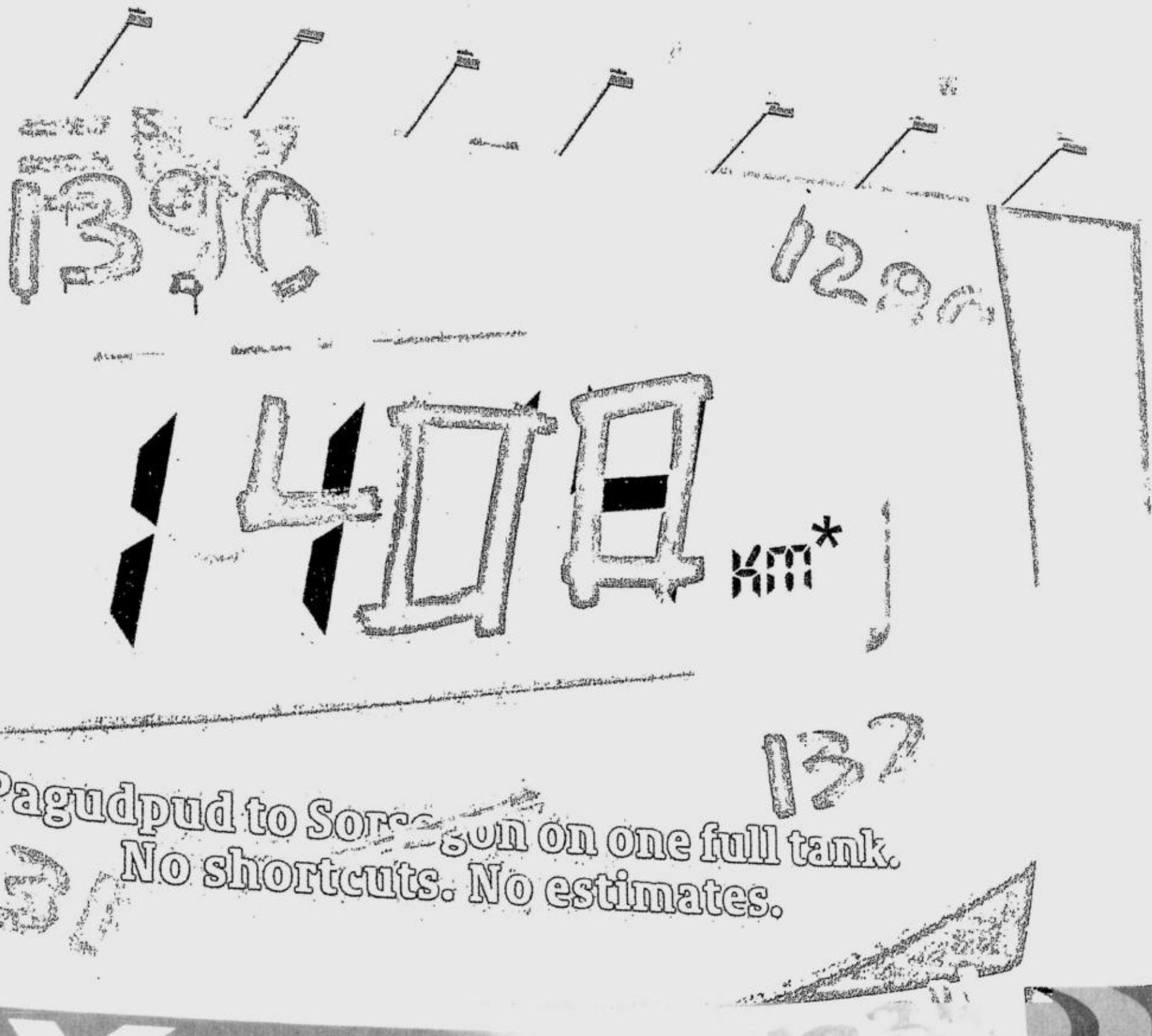
Calilan quits as JRU coach

WITH JUST TWO WEEKS TO GO before the NCAA season starts, Jose Rizal University coach Cris Calilan has reportedly left the team and took most of his players with him.

Commissioner Jun Bernardino said he visited the JRU tune-up match against host St. Benilde last Wednesday and was told by the team that Calilan had indeed resigned unceremoniously.

Calilan is reportedly transferring to another school in another collegiate league. Jimmy Marjano is being eyed as his replacement. *Marc Anthony Reyes*

The record has been broken. Six times.



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Joseph Belarmino - Marikina Heights, Marikina City
Reuel Mark Delez - Karuhatan, Valenzuela
Darc Bigol - San Pablo City, Laguna
Nikko Rey Zamora - Mati, Davao Oriental

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WORLD CUP

England gains without scoring

ENGLAND'S David Beckham (top photo) shoots a free kick to help score England's first goal during the 2006 World Cup soccer match against Paraguay at the Fifa World Cup Stadium in Frankfurt. At left, Argentina's Hernan Crespo celebrates his goal against Ivory Coast during their Group C match in Hamburg. AP, REUTERS

BERLIN—THE GOALS DIDN'T COME EASILY SATURDAY AT the World Cup.

One was enough for England, even if it was Paraguay that scored it. Trinidad and Tobago didn't need a goal to feel like champions, holding Sweden to a 0-0 draw in Group B and setting off celebrations within the Caribbean camp.

Argentina was the biggest scorer, getting goals from Hernan Crespo and Javier Saviola to beat World Cup rookie Ivory Coast, 2-1, in Hamburg.

The only goal so far Saturday came from Paraguay captain Carlos Gamarra, who inadvertently headed David Beckham's curling free kick into his own net in the third minute. It was enough to give the English a 1-0 win and first place in Group B with three points.

Paraguay had more to deal with than just the own-goal in Frankfurt. Besides a decidedly pro-England crowd, goalkeeper Justo Villar left the game injured in the eighth minute.

"I am extremely pleased with the three points at the start," England coach Sven-Goran Eriksson said. "I know that to win the World Cup we need to play better football, but we will play better."

The weather was the biggest problem for England, which won its only World Cup title in 1966. The team was slowed by the increasing heat, which rose to about 30 degrees C (86 degrees F).

"We let them pass the ball around too much," Beckham said. "But we were exhausted. We can put it down to that because we are usually strong and our fitness levels are high."

Villar, who got injured while sliding to clear the ball, will likely miss the rest of the World Cup.

Trinidad, despite playing nearly the entire second half in Dortmund with 10 men, played like it belongs on soccer's biggest stage, earning the scoreless draw against a team that is one of the favorites to advance.

As the final whistle blew, the Trinidad players mobbed goalkeeper Shaka Hislop. After the dejected Swedes left the field, Dwight Yorke led his teammates to the stands where they applauded their fans who had waited years for this game.

Hislop turned aside countless chances from the heavily favored Swedes, and Yorke provided a steadying influence.

"This is like a win for us," Trinidad forward Cornell Glen said. "We can finally get some respect from people. You have to earn it."

Despite a decided edge in experience and talent, as well as the one-man advantage after Avery John was sent off in the 46th minute, Sweden couldn't end its opening-match funk.

Sweden, which has more players on its current squad from the 2002 World Cup than any other team in Germany, is now winless in seven opening matches since 1958, with two losses and five draws.

Crespo pounced on a loose ball in the 24th minute and scored from close range after the African team's defense failed to clear Juan Roman Riquelme's free kick.

Saviola doubled the lead in the 38th. He timed a run to beat the offside trap and collect Riquelme's pass before slipping the ball past goalkeeper Jean-Jacques Tizie.

Didier Drogba got one back for the Elephants in the 82nd, sliding the ball past Argentina goalkeeper Roberto Abbondanzieri after missing with a header seconds before.

The win gives Argentina, which was cheered on by an exuberant Diego Maradona, the lead in Group C with three points.

On Sunday, Serbia-Montenegro plays the Netherlands in the other Group C match, while Angola faces former colonial ruler Portugal and Iran takes on Mexico in Group D.

Off the field, things continued to be calm around Germany.

Officials said part of the reason for the party mood was England's win, which made the 65,000 English fans happy.

"A party mood reigns in Frankfurt and in the whole (state) of Hesse," said Volker Bouffier, the region's top security official. *AP*

Miyazato leads; Delasin falters

HAVRE DE GRACE, MARYLAND—JAPAN'S AI MIYAZATO seized a share of the lead at the McDonald's LPGA Championship Saturday alongside US veteran Pat Hurst.

Miyazato, who entered the third round tied for eighth, recorded four birdies with one bogey in a 69 to pull even with Hurst on 209 after three rounds of the second major on the women's calendar.

Hurst, who completed her second round of one-under-par 71 on Saturday morning after a lengthy weather delay disrupted play on Friday, turned around and carded an even-par 72—with two birdies and a double-bogey—in the third round.

Fil-Am Dorothy Delasin, who held the clubhouse lead after two rounds, shot a fat 81 and tumbled to a tie for 53rd to 59th places at 219.

Teenager Michelle Wie—who missed a qualifying bid for the men's US Open on Monday—was tied with South Koreans Shi Hyun Ahn and Mi Hyun Kim, one stroke back.

Annika Sorenstam struggled to a three-over 75 and was six shots back. *AFP*

Tiger: I don't know what to expect yet

LOS ANGELES—TIGER WOODS ADMITS HE WILL BE TAKING a step into the unknown at next week's US Open as he returns to competition for the first time since the death of his father.

Woods' father Earl died on May 3 after a long battle with cancer and the American hasn't played since the Masters in April.

Earl was a huge influence on his son's career and Woods says he doesn't know what emotions he will experience when the US Open at Winged Foot starts on Thursday.

Writing on his website newsletter, he said: "As for my golf game, I don't really know what to expect next week.

"I've never had to experience anything in life like this and never had a nine-week layoff before.

"So we'll just have to wait and see. Hopefully my game will be sharp."

One player on the tour went through what Woods is going through is Davis Love III, whose father, Davis Love Jr., died in a plane crash in 1988. *AFP*

No more Mr. Nice Guy, says O'Neal

MIAMI Heat coach Pat Riley (middle) talks with guard Dwyane Wade (left) during practice in Dallas, Saturday. Dallas beat Miami in Game 1 of the NBA Finals. AP

DALLAS, TEXAS—SHAQUILLE O'Neal drew first blood in the National Basketball Association finals by smashing an elbow into Mavericks Jerry Stackhouse's nose opening a gash that needed three stitches to close.

But it was Miami who suffered the bloody nose in the end, losing 90-80 in game one in front of a raucous sellout crowd of 20,475 at the Dallas arena.

Dallas star Dirk Nowitzki was also on the receiving end of a giant-size O'Neal elbow on Thursday.

Now here's the bad news for the Mavericks—O'Neal says he plans to step up the attack in game two.

"I'm not going to be as nice as I was in game one," O'Neal said during Saturday's Heat practice at the Dallas arena. "Whoever I am playing against, I just like to punish them.

"You can't punish people with finesse. I like to use my brute strength, but usually when they can't handle that they flop and they fall and the earthlings feel sorry for the other earthlings. I just try to mix it up."

O'Neal, who led the Los Angeles Lakers to three consecutive NBA titles from 2000-2002, has always been his own worst critic.

And O'Neal accepted the blame for Thursday's loss after he scored just 17 points and missed eight of nine free throws.

"The burden is always going to be on me," O'Neal said. "I've accepted that since 1992. I don't have a problem with it.

"Whenever we don't play well, I take a lot of it on my shoulders anyway. The key is to not have two bad games in a row."

O'Neal is a 50-percent lifetime free-throw shooter but prides himself on making them when the game is on the line.

"I see people that shoot 89 percent and then don't make the ones they are supposed to make.

"I have to make the ones I am supposed to make, and I will. It is not a problem."

Despite the loss, O'Neal was in a joking mood when he met with reporters on Saturday. His humor was in contrast to his last finals appearance two years ago with the Lakers when he was dealing with the Kobe Bryant situation.

O'Neal joked about his size, and even spoke a few lines in Dirk Nowitzki's native German.

"I am a freak of nature," O'Neal said. "You've never seen anyone this big, this sexy, move this way.

"When you've got a big, sexy, beautiful man that's up in the 340s, 350s, the way you guys were taught on this planet, you are going to automatically think it is fat.

"My mother used to tell me that I wasn't born, that I was found on the train. I think it was the Amtrak in Jersey City, New Jersey," O'Neal said.

Technically, Game 2 of the NBA finals isn't a must-win for the Miami Heat. Worst case scenario, they head home down 0-2 in the series.

But that's a seriously slippery slope for teams to navigate with a championship on the line—since 25 teams in NBA history have fallen behind 0-2 in the finals, with only two successfully rallying to capture the title.

"It's not the end of the world if we don't win it," Heat forward Antoine Walker said. "But we obviously don't want to put ourselves further behind the 8-ball going down 0-2." *AFP, AP*

Athletes behind in preparation for Asiad

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

TRIATHLON PRESIDENT TOM CARRASCO, a member of the Asian Games Task Force, admitted recently that Filipino athletes training for this year's Doha Asiad are behind schedule in their preparation for the quadrennial meet, stressing that the national team that took part in the Busan Games four years ago prepared much earlier.

With barely six months to go before the Doha Asiad, the lineup has yet to be completed. This is enough proof that nothing much is expected from sports officials who have little to show in the way of progress except that they quarrel a lot and travel very often using public funds.

Many are even asking why the Asian Games Task Force has to name 87 more athletes in addition to 129 it had already recommended to join the trip to Doha, raising the total number of athletes to 216, the country's second biggest in recent years. The Philippines fielded 233 athletes in Busan in 2002, who brought home three gold medals, seven silvers and 16 bronzes.

After the country captured the overall championship of the 23rd SEA Games in December 2005, Philippine Olympic Committee president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco said the country should send only the best to the Doha Games. "The Asian Games is a bigger tournament, so we need to send only the best."

There is no question about that. The people, the taxpayers in particular, are now more sensitive to the country's performance abroad. Since government money is involved, sports fans might not look too kindly if we win just a few medals despite sending a big delegation to the Doha Games. The Philippine Sports Commission has allotted a budget of P30 million for the Doha delegation. According to the Task Force, the total expenses for the athletes would only be around P24 million, thus leaving P6 million in excess which is enough to spend for the additional 87 athletes.

The Asian Games Task Force is headed by athletics president Go Teng Kok, with Red Dumuk, Mario Tanchangco, Harry Angping, Nestor Ilagan and Carrasco as members.

***

TEAM CEBUANA ALL FIRED UP. Teamwork paid off handsome dividends for players of Cebuana Lhuillier who won the recent Manila Slo-Pitch Softball League championship.

"I credit the boys for showing strength of character and for being able to deliver great games even under pressure," said beaming team owner Jean Henri Lhuillier after his Team Cebuana beat Meralco twice in the finals, 15-5 and 14-10. "Winning five games in one day is an achievement brought about by team effort," added the 35-year-old Lhuillier, who scored one home run in both games.

Married to the former gymnastics and taekwondo champion Bea Lucero, Lhuillier is a noted supporter of Philippine sports. He was team manager of both the winning tennis and softball squads in last year's Southeast Asian Games where the Philippines emerged the overall champion.

***

FIFA'S ROLE IN WORLD CUP. Because football is played in such a mammoth scale, it needs to be well organized. In 1904, a group of football aficionados from central European countries got together in Paris and formed the Fifa, the international football federation. Since then, Fifa has grown to become the most influential and powerful sports organization in the world, representing the world's biggest single sporting event, the World Cup of football. Once every four years, the World Cup is on everyone's lips. It has become such a popular sporting event, dominating all others by a huge margin. With more than 120 million registered players worldwide—and an estimated 250 million in total—it is, without question, bigger than any other sport. The biggest group of participating countries comes from Europe, the traditional home of football. The World Cup is attended by more members of the media than any other sports event. Sponsorship of the World Cup means exposure to the biggest television audience on earth.

Dubai colt Jazil king of Belmont

NEW YORK—JAZIL CAME ROARING AROUND THE FINAL turn and cruised to victory in the US$1 million Belmont Stakes on Saturday, taking the final leg of the Triple Crown against a lackluster field missing the Kentucky Derby and Preakness winners.

Without Barbaro and Bernardini, the Belmont was missing its usual appeal, but 18-year-old Panamanian jockey Fernando Jara and Jazil had the crowd on its feet and cheering at Belmont Park in holding off Bluegrass Cat at the finish.

Jazil gave trainer Kiaran McLaughlin his first win in a Triple Crown race, and gave Dubai's sheiks a second straight win in a classic.

The 3-year-old Jazil is owned by Sheik Hamdan's Shadwell Stable, while Bernardini is owned by Dubai's Sheik Mohammed.

Jazil wove his way through the tightly packed 12-horse field, and Jara angled his bay colt to the outside for the stretch run and 1¼-length victory in the 1½-mile (2.4-kilometer) Belmont, the longest and most grueling race of the Triple Crown.

"You don't know how I feel right now," Jara said. "This is amazing."

This Belmont marked just the third time in 36 years the Derby and Preakness winners missed the race, and relegated it to more of a test of the leftovers than its usual reference as the "Test of the Champion."

But McLaughlin and Jara will take the victory, which came five weeks after Jazil finished in a dead heat for fourth with Brother Derek in the Kentucky Derby.

The colt was held out of the Preakness to prepare for the Belmont and became the fourth horse in the last seven years to take that route to Belmont victory. The others were Birdstone in 2004, Empire Maker in 2003 and Commendable in 2000.

"I was very confident when he was weaving through at the five-eighths pole to the quarter pole," McLaughlin said. *AP*

JAZIL crosses the line hounded by Bluegrass Cat to win the 138th running of the Belmont Stakes. AP

Hopkins too good for Tarver

ATLANTIC CITY—BERNARD Hopkins dominated Antonio Tarver here Saturday to earn a lopsided 12-round unanimous decision in their light heavyweight showdown.

Hopkins, the 41-year-old former middleweight world champion who was coming off consecutive losses to Jermain Taylor, was more than a 3-1 underdog entering what he has said will be his last fight.

If it was his final contest, he went out with a flourish against the former undisputed light heavy champ, whose only remaining belt is that of the little known International Boxing Organization.

Hopkins knocked down Tarver once and frustrated him throughout.

All three judges scored the bout 118-109 for Hopkins, now 47-4-1, while Tarver fell to 24-4.

"They got surprised. I could have fought in three different weight classes four or five years ago," said Hopkins who looked very much like the fighter who reigned as middleweight champion for 11 years and 20 fights before his two losses to Taylor.

With less than 90 seconds left in the fifth round, Hopkins landed a straight right hand that staggered Tarver, whose left glove touched the canvas in what was ruled a knockdown. *AFP*

Samsung Tour goes to Davao

MINDANAO'S BEST PLAYERS FACE the challenge of a horde of Manila-based shotmakers led by national team candidates who are flying to Davao City for the resumption this week of the Samsung Amateur Tour at the Rancho Palos Verdes Golf and Country Club.

Mike Bibat and Jay Bayron, members of the 2005 Southeast Asian Games champion squad, as well as Gene Bondoc, Mico Alejandro and veteran Tommy Manotoc are joining the hunt for the championship division crown at the well-kept Palos Verdes course which is hosting the third leg of a nationwide elimination series from Thursday to Sunday (June 15-18).

It will be a power-packed field as several homegrown aces bannered by Jonel Ababa—hero of Canlubang's PAL Interclub romp last February—are out to give the visitors a rough welcome in the 72-hole competition.

Ben Miñoza, Louie Dakudao and other members of the Del Monte squad as well as Palos Verdes club champ Tibor Marcelino and caddies standouts Joseph and Mario Labajo are also playing in the event co-sponsored by Taylor Made, C-Lium Fibre, Microtel, Titleist, Custom Clubmakers/KZG, Sunbolt. Media partners are Jam 88.3, Wave 89.1, Magic 89.9 and 99.5 RT.

They will be contesting the third slot to the national grand finals this coming November at Mt. Malarayat.

Already in are Marvin Dumandan who came from behind to tie Bayron then beat him in a three-hole playoff for the title at the Baguio Country Club and Bernis who foiled an upset bid by unknown Paul Echavez in the second leg at Summit Point in Batangas.

SPORTSWATCH

Cambell rules Rotary golf

GUEST PLAYER DANNY CAMBELL AND NEW Manila East B aced the 12th hole of the Tagaytay Midlands course recently to emerge as the biggest winner in the recent Rotary District 3780 "Golf for a Cause." Cambell, who eventually topped the Guest division over Roland Kapunan, won the massage chair from OSIM Phils. for his feat. He also led his team to the overall title and the PDG Pete Morales Jr. Memorial Cup by edging Diliman B, 117-115. Diliman settled for the Division II crown. The other team winners were Metro West Triangle A (Division 1) and Metro West Triangle C (Division III). Metro West Triangle A beat Quezon City A by three points while RC MWT C easily hurdled host RC San Francisco del Monte, 113-105.

Sta. Barbara centennial

SEVERAL EVENTS WILL BE HELD TO CELEBRATE the 100th anniversary of the Sta. Barbara Golf Course in Iloilo next year. The Iloilo Golf and Country Club Inc., which now manages the oldest golf course in the Philippines, will be organizing the events, including the unveiling of a marker by the National Historical Institute. Further enhancing the significance of the celebration, the National Golf Association of the Philippines and the Federation of Golf Clubs of the Phils. have declared next year as the Centennial Year of Golf in the country. The course was developed in 1907 by Scottish engineers employed by the Panay Railway Co. to construct a steam locomotive system. For inquiries, call 632-812-2595 or (Iloilo) 6333-523-9779.

Makiling winner to Sydney

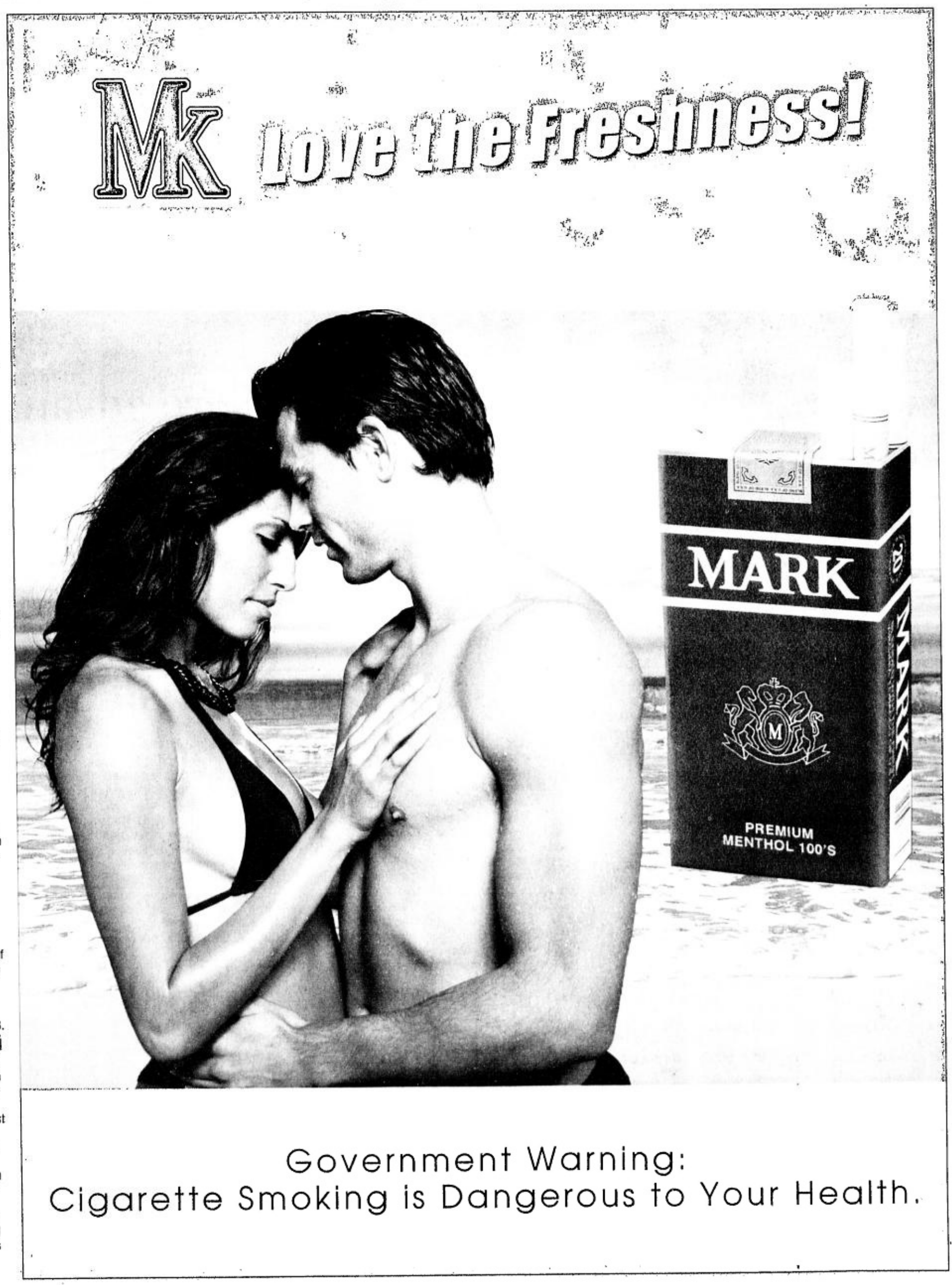
A SLOT TO THE 30TH SYDNEY CITY TO SURF run and an all-expense paid trip to Sydney Australia are up for grabs in the C-Lium Fibre 5th Makiling Challenge, to be staged on July 23 in UP Los Baños, Laguna. Cash prizes for other top finishers will also be given away. Sponsored by the country's leading health fibre supplement, the race will consist of a 10-km and a 5-km run up the slopes of the mystical Mt. Makiling. Pre-registered participants will receive running singlets and trial packs of C-Lium Fibre, the only all natural fibre supplement that is 100 percent Psyllium Fibre, acknowledged as possibly the best food fibre in the world. Registration is now being accepted by the Makiling Campus Runners, the event organizer.

Senior citizens chess reset

BECAUSE OF A STRONG CLAMOR FOR PARTICIpation coming from northern Luzon and southern Mindanao, The First Senior Citizen's Chess Tournament originally scheduled for June 11 and 12 at the Marikina Sports Park has been reset to June 26 and 27. Roland Santos, Alyansa Senior ng Filipinas trustee and tournament director, made the announcement yesterday. Over P100,000 in prizes, including cash, trophies, souvenir items and benefits, plus the NCFP title of Senior Master to the eventual winner, are at stake in the Active 30-minute per player, per game nine-round Swiss System. Players 60 years old and above with valid OSCA cards are eligible to join. For inquiries, call 9347518 or 09219833388.

Spencer 5-cocker in Makati

THE SHOWDOWN OF BIG-TIME COCKERS AND gamefowl breeders shifts to the Makati Coliseum today as the "Spencer 5-cock derby" gets underway starting 5 p.m. Sixty-five fights are on tap with B-Meg Derby Ace as exclusive sponsor. Host William Co of the WTJ Sports and Amusement Corp. said that aficionados can expect non-stop quality fights from start to finish. Entry fee is P55,000. Meanwhile, the "Salpukan Sa Taglugon 5-cock derby" set on July 10, 12, 15, 17, 19 and 22, continues to attract participants even from faraway provinces. This is due to the huge guaranteed prize of P2 million plus a brand-new Ford Escape for the fastest win champion. Entry fee is only P10,000. For inquiries, call 895-6475 and 896-3545.



SPORTS

Henin-Hardenne bags 3rd French Open title

PARIS—JUSTINE HENIN-HARDENNE STUCK to her winning routine in the French Open final. She glided gracefully across the clay, unleashed her picturesque backhand, pumped her fist, shouted "Allez!" and, in the end, claimed another championship.

Henin-Hardenne won her fifth Grand Slam title and her third at Roland Garros, beating Svetlana Kuznetsova, 6-4, 6-4, Saturday.

Seeded fifth, the Belgian became the first woman to win consecutive titles at Roland Garros since Steffi Graf in 1995-96, and the first to win three French Open titles in four years since Graf in 1993-96.

"The first win was special, obviously," Henin-Hardenne said. "Three is a lot. I'm joining great champions like Steffi Graf or Arantxa Sanchez. I'm very happy."

HENIN-HARDENNE

Henin-Hardenne became the first woman to win the title without losing a set since Sanchez Vicario in 1994. And, for the third time, she won the final in straight sets.

But the victory didn't come easily.

On the warmest day of the tournament, with temperatures in the 80s (27-31c) under a cloudless sky, the match almost became an endurance contest. Henin-Hardenne looked tired early in the second set and applied a bag of ice to the back of her neck during changeovers.

"Physically I did suffer a lot," Henin-Hardenne said. "I was beginning to feel tired in the last two or three days. I was nervous and could not sleep. And I was getting very tired with the heat also."

She struggled with her renowned backhand early but hit big serves on key points and took advantage of Kuznetsova's erratic forehand. Henin-Hardenne's unsurpassed anticipation helped, too, allowing her to extend rallies.

"Players don't like when the ball is coming back all the time," Henin-Hardenne said. "And that's what I try to do."

She saved some of her best tennis for the final few games, winning 11 of 12 points during one stretch.

"She plays smart," said Kuznetsova, who fell to 1-11 against Henin-Hardenne. "She mixes up her game. And it's her mentality —she believes a lot to win."

The men's final Sunday shapes up as the match of the year, with Roger Federer seeking his fourth consecutive Grand Slam title—and his first in Paris—when he plays defending champion Rafael Nadal.

"I have created a fabulous opportunity for myself," Federer said, "so we'll see if I can make it good."

Federer has won 27 consecutive Grand Slam matches; Nadal has won a record 59 matches in a row on clay.

"It's a nice match, No. 1 and No. 2," Nadal said. "He's one of the best of the history. He's a superstar of the world—not just in tennis, in all sports."

Henin-Hardenne has become a star herself, especially in Paris. She speaks often of the tournament as her favorite—growing up in neighboring Belgium, she attended Roland Garros as a child with her mother, who died when Henin-Hardenne was 12.

And on Saturday, she was again the queen of clay.

The match started going Henin-Hardenne's way on the second point. Kuznetsova won it, but the chair umpire ruled the ball was deflated and ordered the point replayed.

Kuznetsova argued, went on to hold the advantage on her serve but was then broken. She lost serve again in the fifth game, double-faulting twice to fall behind 4-1. The Russian steadied her strokes and watched rallied to hold. *AP*

JUSTINE Henin-Hardenne reacts after winning a point against Russian Svetlana Kuznetsova. AFP

Unseeded Hallare advances in 'Copa'

UNSEEDED DANIELLE HALLARE rallied past Kimberly Tomacruz, 6-3, 5-7, (10-6), yesterday to advance to the next round of the girls' 16-under division of the 7th Copa de Manila Age Group Tennis Championships at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.

Hallare will next face seventh-seeded JV Custodio, who breezed past Mary Adelaine Flores, 6-0, 6-1.

In other matches, top seed Bambi Zoleta blasted Claudine Cruz, 6-0, 6-0; No. 4 July Javelosa demolished Sarina Samson, 6-0, 6-0; No. 5 Joan Therese Opulencia downed Nadine Castillo, 6-0, 6-1; No. 6 Martina Rivero outclassed Alyssa Mendoza, 6-2, 6-0; and Janine Salgado whipped Laurice Francisco, 6-1, 6-1.

In girls' 14-under, Pia Tamayo defeated Treena Quirrez, 6-1, 6-2; Rachel Lucero downed Nicole Eugenio, 6-0, 6-2; Marian Jade Capadocia blanked Joana Jean Carnay, 6-0, 6-0; and Myona Frances Ramos beat Patricia Orteza, 6-0, 6-1.

In the boys' 12-under division, Martin Rafael Opulencia outlasted Hans Angelo Asistio, 7-6 (4), 4-6, (11-4), to join Jurence Mendoza, Carl Anthony Natividad, Jorel Vincent Buenaflor, Mustafa Burahan, Zainal Burahan and Eugene Alza in the next round.

First-round winners in the unisex 10-under category were Zainul Burahan over Hans Go, 6-1, 1-6, (10-3), Jacob Echague over Miguel Bulaon, 6-2, 6-2, Patricia Nicole Paez over Julla Dominisac, 6-3, 6-0, Brysl Libao over Arkaine Cordova, 6-1, 6-0, Juan Rodrigo Santos over Margaret Agnes Flores, 6-0, 6-0, Jeremiah Latore over Maia Balce, 6-0, 6-0, Martin Rafael Opulencia over Edmond Canete Jr., 6-0, 6-0, and Joel Atienza over Jade Capadocia, 6-0, 6-1.

This two-weekend netfest organized by Manila City vice mayor and Confederation of Tennis Clubs Philippines Inc. president Danilo Lacuna will resume on June 17.

Alonso gains British Grand Prix pole

SILVERSTONE, ENGLAND—FERNANDO ALONso captured his fourth consecutive pole of the Formula One season and it didn't take long for him to share the credit.

Just after posting the fastest time in qualifying for the British Grand Prix Saturday, he thanked his Renault team over the car radio.

"Four times consecutive on pole is fantastic for us," Alonso said.

Alonso's Renault had a time of 1 minute, 20.253 seconds on the 5.1-kilometer (3.2-mile) Silverstone circuit.

Kimi Raikkonen of McLaren, who has finished third, second and third in the last three races here, came in second with 1:20.397 and Michael Schumacher was third in 1:20.574.

It was the 13th career pole for Alonso, who has won the last two races and four of seven this season.

"I was really pleased to get pole today," Alonso said. "I made a little mistake on my first flying lap in the super-pole and I knew it was close with Michael. So we fitted another set of tires and I managed to do a better lap."

The qualifying was moved up 90 minutes to finish ahead of England's match against Paraguay at the World Cup. Fans stayed and cheered the English 1-0 victory watching on large screens usually reserved for the race.

Schumacher led the final practice on Saturday morning. After a slow start to the season, he has been coming on. He won two of the last four races.

"I did not expect such a gap to the pole time but now we have to see what these tenths really mean," Schumacher said.

"There's no reason not to believe that we have a package that can win. But we have to see if we can manage."

Fourth was Schumacher's Ferrari teammate Felipe Massa, 1:20.764. Jenson Button of England failed to make it past the first qualifying test. *AP*

Tagaytay nips Taguig

TAGUIG CITY—BATANG TAGAYTAY clinched the last semifinal seat in the northern division of the 2006 Guerrero Brandy-NBC national basketball championship by nosing out Forward Taguig, 77-76, Saturday at the CP Tinga gym here.

Rodel Mallari played his best game of the season so far, banging in 27 points, but it was Niño Marquez's fourth quarter heroics that saved the day for the Tagaytay dribblers of NBC executive vice president and Mayor Bambol Tolentino.

"I just told the boys to hold on until the end," said coach Lito Aguilar after Tagaytay posted a 6-5 record in the tourney sponsored by Panasonic, Sulpicio Lines, Nature's Spring Mineral Water, Spring Cooking Oil, Regent Foods, Firely Lightings, Molten and Prime Channel.

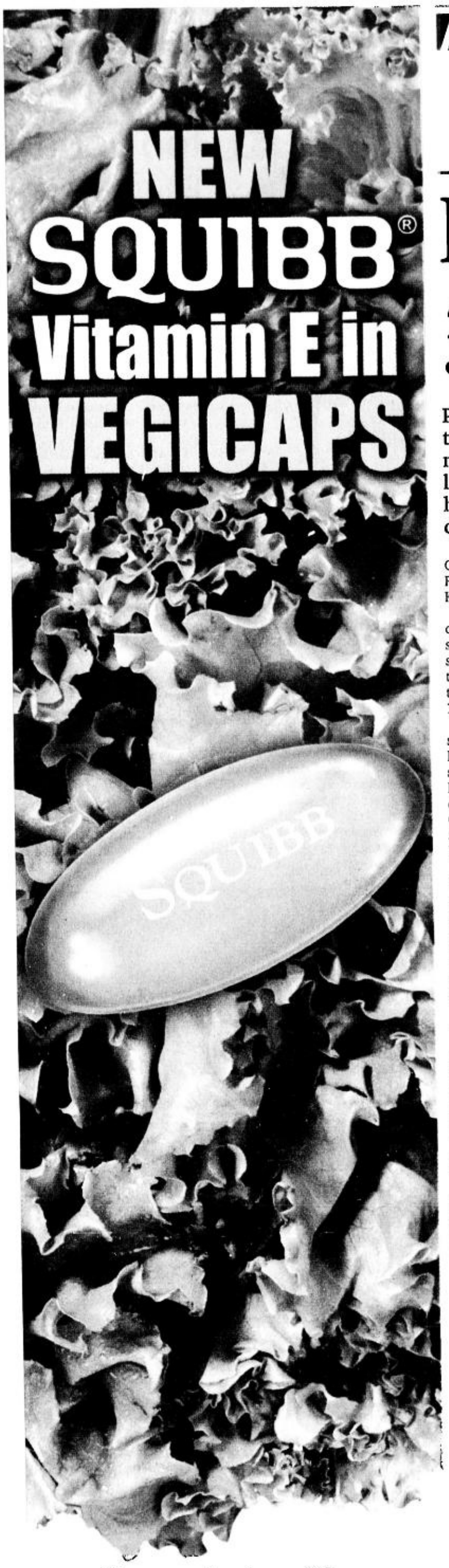
Playoff action starts in the southern division today with Mayor Lawrence Cruz's Iligan Crusaders hosting the Iloilo Warriors at 6 p.m. at the MSU-IIT gym. The winner faces second-seeded Pagadian.

The scores:

TAGAYTAY 77—Mallari 27, Marquez 17, Finuliar 8, Caceres 7, Gulyab 6, Robillos 6, Reyes 4, Mendoza 2, Genido 2.

TAGUIG 76—Uy 25, Legaspi 16, Gahol 13, Reguera 9, Abad 7, Dela Rosa 2, Constantino 2, Lapinid 2, Castro 0, Acion.

Quarters: 18-17, 37-33, 51-50, 77-76.



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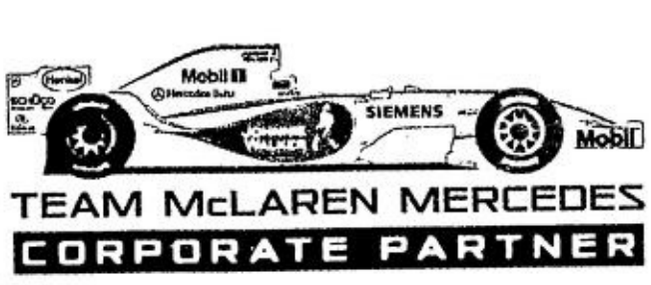

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ENTERTAINMENT

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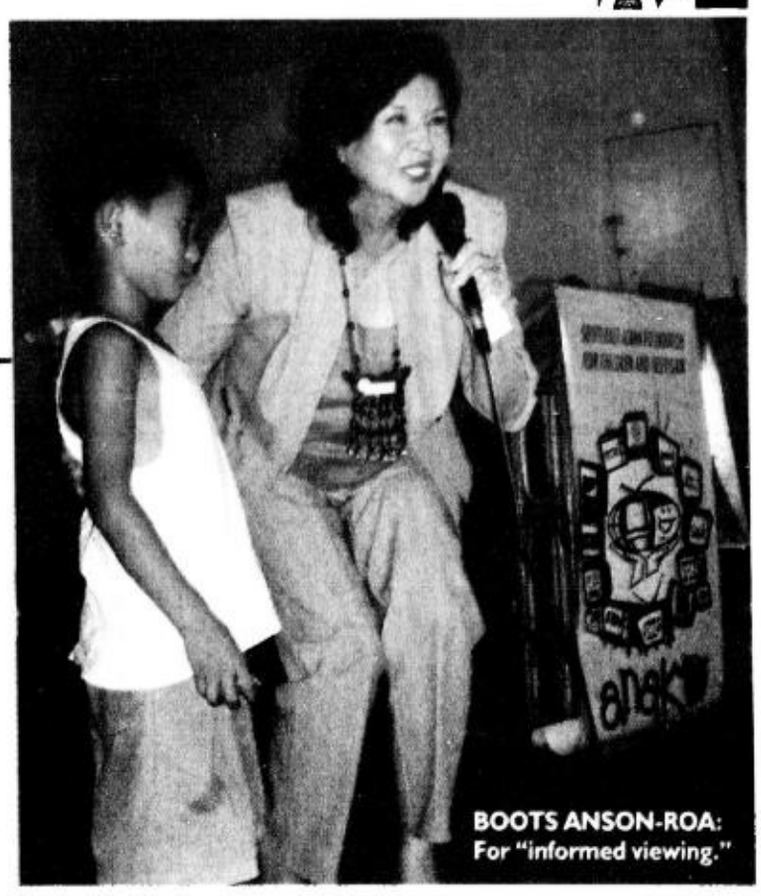


BOOTS ANSON-ROA: For "informed viewing."

Kid-sensitive TV wins parents' nod

By Marinel R. Cruz

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—"It's about time that we, parents, were given the power to pick what shows our children should be watching on television," declared actress Boots Anson-Roa, spokesperson of the Southeast Asian Foundation for Children and Television (SEAFCTV).

KID-SENSITIVE/ A2-3

ERIK ARAZAS

LIA Andrea Ramos at Friday's press conference.

RP beauty feels she's next Miss U

By Armin Adina

IT'S BEEN 33 YEARS SINCE MARGARITA Moran won the country's last Miss Universe crown. Lia Andrea Ramos said the Philippines has waited long enough.

During the Binibining Pilipinas Charities' send-off party for her on Friday, Lian—our representative to the Miss U pageant this year—said she had "this gut feel" that she'd bring home the crown.

The pageant will be held on July 23 in Los Angeles, California, where, fortunately, her entire family is based. An immense amount of support from their Ilocano relatives also awaits her there, she said.

During the Bb. Pilipinas pageant last March, the 5'7" beauty romped away with most of the special awards—Miss Photogenic, Best in Swimsuit, Miss Philippine Airlines and Mane and Tail Best Hair Award. A totally surprising feat for someone who once said joining pageants was "not my cup of tea."

In 2001, she joined her first national pageant—and lost. But beauty queen maker Jonas Gaffud saw immense potential in the neophyte contestant. Gaffud decided it would take only proper guidance and training to make a winner out of her.

Five years later, and reaching the maximum age limit for Binibining Pilipinas, Lian agreed to give it another shot. "Making that one decision at 25, there should be no room for regrets later," said the political science graduate of the University of the Philippines.

Preparations

The decision proved to be a wise one, of course. Outgoing Bb. Pilipinas-Universe Gionna Cabrera, Miss Photogenic in last year's Miss U in Thailand, turned the title over to Lian.

To prepare for the big time, Lian had taken a break from her work as assistant program officer at Asia Foundation-Philippines, a nonprofit organization committed to developing "a peaceful, prosperous, just, and open" Asia-Pacific region.

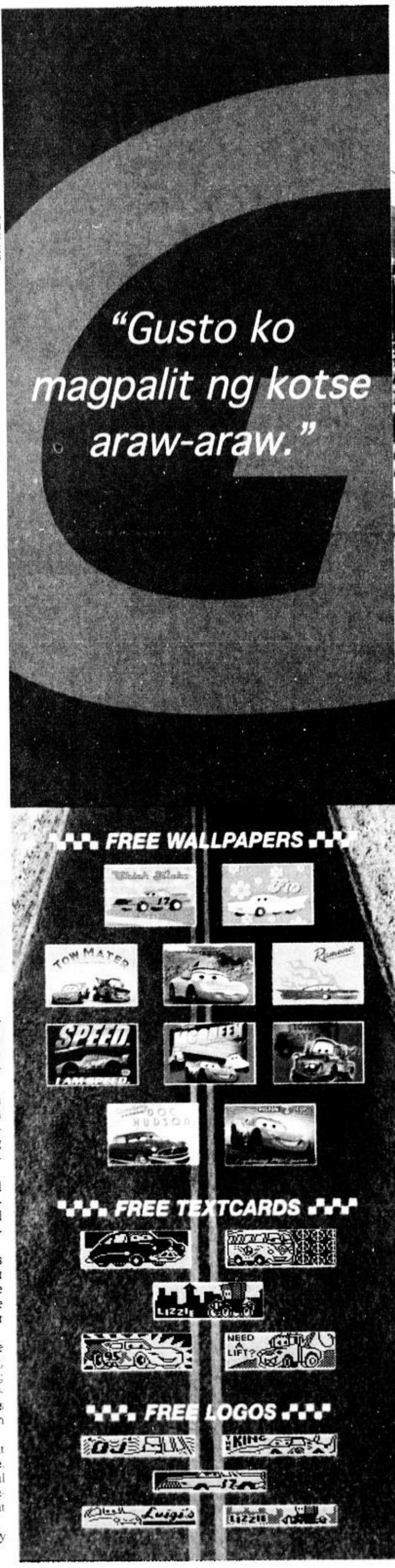
A team of accomplished women handled her training, as well those of her two co-winners Ana Maris Igpit, Bb. Pilipinas-World; and Denille Lou Vamonte, Bb Pilipinas-International.

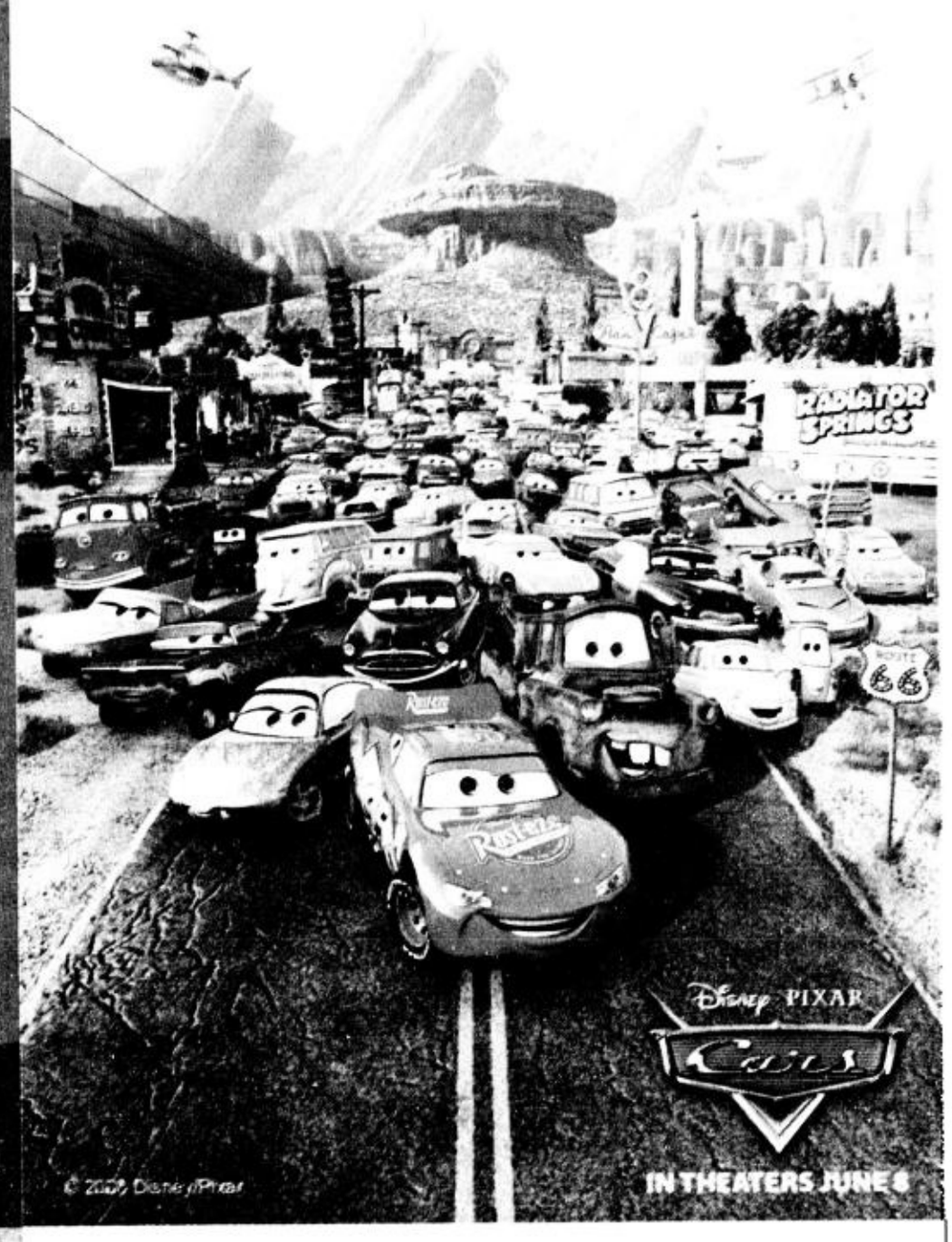
Lian said Miss International 2005 Precious Lara Quigaman's advice was: "Be confident and natural, and believe in yourselves. There will be a lot of beautiful candidates. You have to believe you are as beautiful as those other women."

Several catwalk, makeup and wardrobe tricks were also shared by Maricar Balagtas, the first Asian to be crowned Miss Globe; Maan Bayot, winner of special awards in several international pageants; and former Miss Universe contestants Carla Balingit and Karen Agustin.

Lian also took personality development and public speaking lessons at Dale Carnegie. Yesterday she left for Colombia for additional pageant training. Colombian designer Alfredo Barraza is designing her pageant wardrobe.

She appealed to all Filipinos: "Please pray for me. I will do my best to win the title."





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MONDAY, JUNE 12, 2006

FOXTROT BY BILL AMEND

A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA

BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT

PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR

MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

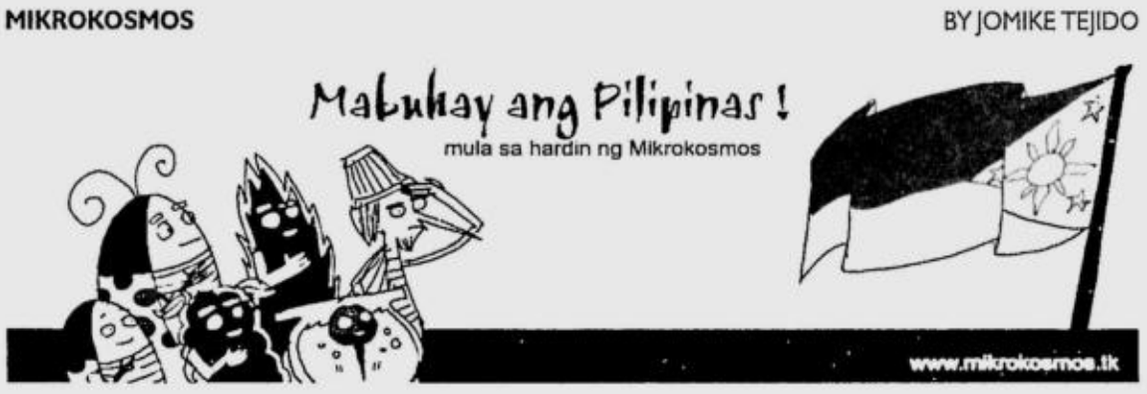
ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO

DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABALINAS

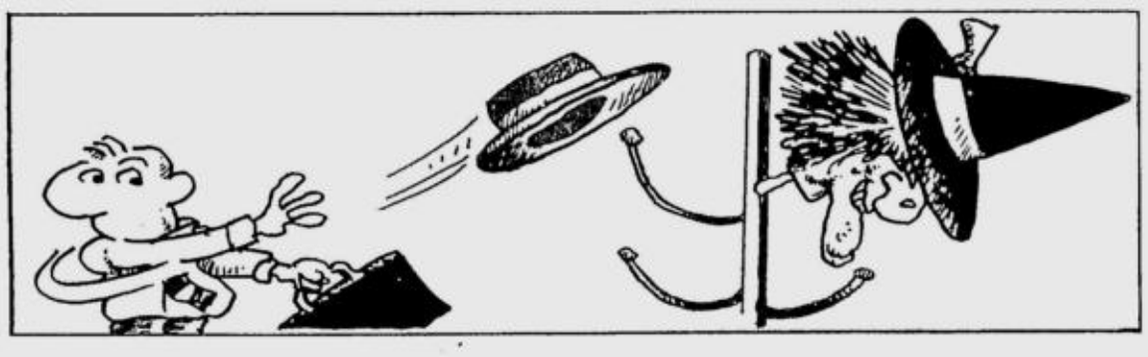
THE TRINITY DECIDING ON THE FATE OF THE DUCK-BILLED PLATYPUS

KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA

MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO



TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

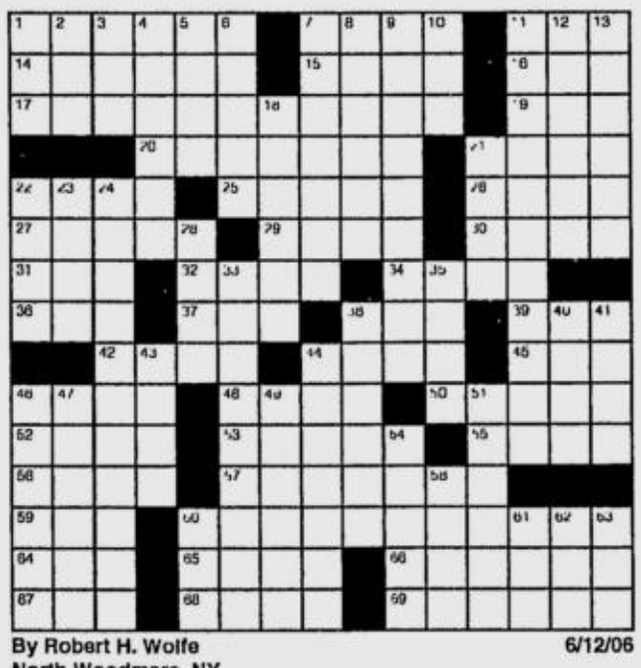


BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Take stock
7 Mae or Adam
11 Some TV sets
14 Purple dinosaur
15 One who gets what's left?
16 "Norma __"
17 "The Flying Deuces" co-star
19 Table scrap
20 Inane
21 Courage
22 Tennis stadium honoree
25 Stoppage of breathing
26 Canyon's reply
27 Miniature
29 Irked
30 Comparison word
31 Egt.-Syr., once
32 Last bio?
34 Just average
36 Sense of self
37 Dash
38 Cool prez?
39 Fairy queen
42 "Shane" star
44 Cowboy's chum
45 LAX or IAD info
46 Betting figures
48 Summer drinks
50 "Crazy Legs" Hirsch
52 Pitcher's miscue
53 Negate
55 __ Hill, MD
56 Nocturnal raptors
57 Struck sightless
59 Altar avowal
60 "In the Navy" co-star
64 Foxlike
65 Sicilian volcano
66 Kovacs and Els
67 Tycoon Turner
68 Anna of "Nana"
69 Sappho's birthplace

DOWN
1 Blood class. syst.
2 Actor Mineo
3 __ Lanka
4 Little green man?
5 Potential plant
6 Damascus land
7 Bric-a-brac
8 Stranger
9 "It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World" co-star
10 Attempt
11 "At the Circus" co-star
12 Singer Kitt
13 Attacks
18 Quickly enters a car
21 Understands
22 For two, in music
23 Booty
24 "Safety Last" star
28 Shallow crossing
33 "In the Navy" co-star
35 Ye __ Shoppe
38 Sands or Mirage, e.g.
40 End of a buck?
41 __ Mawr College
43 Inquires
44 Big-billed bird
46 Woodwind player
47 Drag one's feet
49 Clair __
51 Woolen coats
54 Ford flop
58 Nice to be?
60 "__ Girls"
61 P.E. Trudeau's party
62 Actor Gorcey
63 Precursor of the CIA



By Robert H. Wolfe
North Woodmere, NY
6/12/06

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

C	O	M	B	A	T	■	S	C	A	L	A	B	L	E
A	R	E	O	L	A	■	A	R	M	O	I	R	E	S
T	I	A	R	A	S	■	M	I	N	U	T	E	S	T
A	F	T	E	R	T	A	S	T	E	S	■	A	S	E
L	I	L	■	M	I	R	■	■	S	E	T	T	E	E
I	C	E	S	■	E	I	G	H	T	■	A	H	E	M
N	E	S	T	E	R	■	L	A	Y	B	Y	■	■	■
A	S	S	A	D	■	B	A	Y	■	A	L	A	M	O
■	■	■	C	A	B	E	R	■	A	T	O	N	A	L
M	A	H	K	■	R	F	E	D	S	■	R	A	N	D
O	D	E	S	S	A	■	■	I	S	O	■	P	A	S
R	E	S	■	U	N	D	E	R	A	R	H	E	S	T
O	L	E	A	N	D	E	R	■	G	L	A	S	S	Y
S	E	A	F	R	O	N	T	■	A	O	R	T	A	L
E	S	T	R	A	N	G	E	■	I	N	E	S	S	E

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6/12/06

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're a constant optimist. You believe in a better tomorrow. Your breezy, bright energy helps you make friends. Furthermore, you're a generous person. You need to be active, especially physically active. In your early 40s, you will connect with your creative self-expression in a major way. This year might be one of the best years of your life!
Birthdate of: George H.W. Bush, 41st US president; Chick Corea, musician; Anne Frank, diarist/holocaust victim.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Unexpected company might drop by your home today. Perhaps a family member is a source of surprise. New technology or interruptions with technology are possible.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You're full of clever, original ideas today. You're ready for anything! This enthusiastic approach to life will probably draw different people into your world. Expect to meet someone new.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): New and different ways of making money might occur to you today. Expect surprises with your cash flow. You might want to buy something rather high tech or very modern.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): There's excitement in the air today! You're eager and enthusiastic about something. Your routine will definitely be interrupted. Just go with flow and enjoy!

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): A sudden realization about something could occur to you today. You might have a deeper understanding about yourself or about something that's important to you.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Conversations with others are fascinating today. They almost have an electric quality to them. Friends can surprise you. Alternatively, you might meet someone who is a real character.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): A boss or a parent will surprise you today, or vice versa. Unexpected news will catch you off-guard. Be ready for sudden opportunities to get ahead in some way or to boost your reputation.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Surprise opportunities to expand your education or to travel somewhere are likely to arise today. Be ready to act quickly; your window of opportunity is very short.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Keep your pockets open. The wealth of others can suddenly benefit you today. At the very least, someone will do a favor for you.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Conversations will take a few surprising turns when talking to partners and close friends today. Others might assert their freedom and surprise you. People are feisty and independent today!

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Expect interruptions on your job. Fire drills, computer crashes, power outages or even the introduction of new technology or a new staff member will make this day different.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Love at first sight could happen today. Surprising news about entertaining events, the arts and sports are likely. Parents should be extra-vigilant with children. (Guard against accidents.)

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

5	7	2						3
			6		3			5
			1		7			8
	6	3	7	8	9	5	1	
	4	8	3	1	5	7	2	
6			9		2			
1			8		4			
4						8	9	2

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Difficulty Level ★
6/12

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

4	1	3	6	5	7	8	2	9
8	6	2	9	3	4	5	1	7
9	7	5	2	1	8	6	4	3
3	2	9	7	8	6	1	5	4
7	4	6	1	9	5	2	3	8
5	8	1	3	4	2	7	9	6
2	3	7	4	6	1	9	8	5
1	5	4	8	7	9	3	6	2
6	9	8	5	2	3	4	7	1

Difficulty Level ★★★★★
6/11

Kid-sensitive TV . . .

From page A2-1

Anson-Roa was speaking to more than a hundred parents who participated in the Anak TV Seal jury screening and symposium on "Child Sensitive Television," hosted by the SEAFCTV.

INQUIRER Entertainment joined Anson-Roa and the parent-jurors for an afternoon at the Pilgrim Christian College gymnasium here, where they discussed kids' TV viewing habits and participated in a survey.

For five years now, SEAFCTV has been conducting screenings and surveys all over the country to determine which programs viewers feel should get the foundation's Anak TV Seal.

Anak TV Seal is an award bestowed on TV programs regarded as child-sensitive, said Mag Hatol Cruz, SEAFCTV secretary general.

The screening here—joined by mothers, mostly—was only one in a series held yearly from February to July. Similar jury screenings and symposia are conducted in Visayas and Luzon, said Cruz.

Feeling guilty

"We should practice guided and informed viewing in every household," Anson-Roa pointed out.

During the symposium, Joan, a young mother, admitted that she felt guilty she did not have time to keep an eye on what her child watched on TV. Joan said she spent most of her time managing the family business.

From the crowd, Anson-Roa found 10-year-old Titos, who claimed he hardly watched TV. "That makes him a unique boy," Anson-Roa noted. "Most children have misplaced values because of watching the wrong kinds of shows."

Around 10 television sets were mounted in the gym. The screening session began with TV plugs from SEAFCTV spokespersons Gary Valenciano, Mikee Cojuangco-Jaworski, Aga Muhlach, Emmy Abrera and couple Julius and Christine Babao, among others.

The TV plugs remind parents that not all

KID-SENSITIVE/ A2-6

PARENTS, along with their kids, participate in the jury screening and symposium at the Pilgrim Catholic College.

FEEDBACK

FROM Edwin Sison (joma_sison@yahoo.com), 27 Lipton St., Quezon City:

Call me naive, short-sighted, whatever.

But of what benefit is it to me that some Filipinos have reached the summit of the Everest?

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NOT ALL WATER IS HOLY...

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A FILM BY LUIS DE LA MADRID

THE NUN

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Tokyo	USD550

Destinations	Return fares from Manila & Cebu
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Chennai	USD450
Delhi	USD450
Hyderabad	USD450
Mumbai	USD450
China	
Beijing	USD440
Chengdu	USD440
Guangzhou	USD440
Kunming	USD440
Shanghai	USD440
Xiamen	USD440

Destinations	Return fares from Manila & Cebu
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London*	USD670
Paris	USD670
Rome	USD670
Stockholm	USD670
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MTRCB Rating: R-18

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Katharine McPhee to s

By Kathryn Fatima Reyes

SOMEWHERE OVER the rainbow... the dream that you dare to dream really do come true."

Katharine McPhee's dream has come true. This year's "American Idol" runner-up said she wanted to include "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" in her CD single. The song, from "Wizard of Oz," carried her through to the season's finals, where she faced eventual winner Taylor Hicks in the final face-off.

The 22-year-old Kat just inked a record deal with producer Clive Davis. In a recent conference call (arranged by Star World) she said she wanted to make a pop album.

INQUIRER EXCLUSIVE

KATHARINE McPhee: It is said that Steven Spielberg has asked to meet her. AP

Her CD singer, due for release on June 27, includes... guess what? And also the song, "My Destiny," which was written for her and which she performed for the first time on stage during the finale.

Less than a month later, this gorgeous girl from Sherman Oaks, California has clinched important singing jobs outside of "Idol." She is singing with Italian tenor Andrea Bocelli in three of his US tour concert series, which started June 9.

She enthused, "I just love waking up and having people there [waving] a paper in front of me and [saying], 'Okay, you're doing this.' That's just so exciting to be busy and to get paid for doing stuff that you love."

Do you have some things mapped out... like, who you're going to work with on your album and what's going on it?

I haven't thought about [those things] yet. But I definitely love Diane Warren. I'm a big fan of her stuff and I want us to get together and maybe start writing some stuff together.

What's the album going to be like?

Probably a little bit like Top 40. I think if I were to do bluesy-jazzy stuff with all the standards. I would do that more as a theme album.

A few of your fellow finalists were somewhat relieved when leaving the show. Does being runner-up give you a little more freedom, less pressure?

Absolutely. I was so at peace with whatever was going to happen, even before Taylor and I had our top-two showdown. There are so many things I want to do other than music.

How did you feel about Simon Cowell unofficially declaring Taylor Hicks the winner before results night?

I thought to myself, if Taylor wins, that's what was meant to be. But I did [wonder], maybe my fans will vote more, I could actually get to sit down with some of my fans. They were like, "We voted four hours straight."

How nervous were you during finals night?

I was definitely nervous, especially when the results came in. It's just... something I couldn't control. I didn't expect anything. I was really happy to just be there and represent the West Coast as the only girl left in the competition

Did Steven Spielberg really ask to meet with you?

Well, there's not really much I can divulge about that. All I can say is, if anything, it's probably [going to be] just a meeting... nothing has been clarified.

What's been the best thing, so far, about being famous?

The fact that I get really cool clothes to wear and stuff like that. I'm such a girly girl.

How does it feel to continue to work with the other finalists

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OPENS JUNE 14

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TAKE THE LEAD 1:00 / 3:50 / 6:40 / 9:30	MANAY PO 12:40 / 2:55 / 5:10 / 7:25 / 9:40	THE DA VINCI CODE 12:30 / 3:40 / 6:50 / 10:00	
ALL ABOUT LOVE 12:10 / 2:35 / 5:00 / 7:25 / 9:50	BENCH WARMERS 12:25 / 2:15 / 4:05 FAILURE TO LAUNCH 6:00 / 8:00 / 10:00	X-MEN 3 12:40 / 3:00 / 5:20 / 7:40 / 10:00	OMEN 666 1:55 / 4:25 / 6:55 / 9:25

MALL CINEMAS

1	OMEN 666 12:55 / 3:25 / 5:55 / 8:30	2	THE DA VINCI CODE 12:10 / 2:55 / 5:40 / 8:25	3	X-MEN 3 11:30 / 1:50 / 4:10 / 6:30 / 8:50
4	CARS 12:30 / 3:00 / 5:30 / 8:00	5	ALL ABOUT LOVE 12:10 R5 / 1:15 / 3:40 / 6:05 / 8:30		DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

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on the "American Idol" tour?

It feels great. We're such a fun group. There are so many different personalities, like from Bucky to Kellie. We laugh a lot. I think we're going to put on a great show—that's what it's really about.

Who are you dating?

I'm not going to answer that. (INQUIRER Entertainment later learned from various websites that Kat did have a boyfriend, 41-year-old Nick Cokas.)

Who among the finalists do you most enjoy working with?

I really love Chris. He's always been really fun and easy going. Mandisa is always great to work with because she's just so positive all the time and is always laughing. And I just like to be around people that are, overall, very positive and makes things more fun than they really are. But everyone was so great.

What will you do with your money—are you newly rich?

I don't even know if I'm rich. But I really would love to have my own place. Right now, I'm still living with the "Idols." I hope to be going home to my own apartment. I'm 22; it's time to move out.

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TAKE THE LEAD PG13 12:15,2:45,5:15, 7:45,10:15	CARS G 11:25,2:05,4:45, 7:25,10:05	CARS G 11:55,2:35,5:15,7:55
OMEN 666 R13 1:10,3:30,5:50, 8:10,10:30	FAILURE TO LAUNCH PG13 12:40,3:00,5:20 X-MEN: THE LAST STAND PG13 7:40,10:00	THE INSIDE MAN PG13 12:15,2:45,5:15, 7:45,10:15

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CINEMA 3 THE INSIDE MAN 11:45, 2:30, 5:15, 8:00, 10:35 PG13
CINEMA 4 CARS 11:00, 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00 GP
CINEMA 5 OMEN 6+6+6 10:30, 12:50, 3:10, 5:30, 7:50, 10:10 R13
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2 CARS 12:20, 3:00, 5:50, 8:30, 11:10 GP
3 TAKE THE LEAD 11:40, 5:10, 10:35 PG-13 | CARS 2:35, 7:55 G
4 THE INSIDE MAN 12:10, 2:55, 5:40, 8:25, 11:05 PG-13

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THX

G1 GLORIETTA 1	1 THE OMEN	2 X-MEN: THE LAST STAND	3 MANAY PO	4 ALL ABOUT LOVE
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 CARS	2 THE OMEN	3 THX INSIDE MAN 12:30, 3:00, 5:30, 8:00, 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 FAILURE TO LAUNCH	5 TAKE THE LEAD	6 X-MEN: THE LAST STAND	7 THE DA VINCI CODE
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 X-MEN: THE LAST STAND	2 THE OMEN		
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX CARS 2:30, 5:10, 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX THE OMEN 2:00, 4:20, 6:40, 9:00, 11:20 GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 TAKE THE LEAD 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	4 X-MEN: THE LAST STAND 2:20, 4:30, 6:40, 8:50, 11:00 GUARANTEED SEATS	5 INSIDE MAN 1:15, 3:45, 6:15, 8:45, 11:15 GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX CARS	2 INSIDE MAN		
	3 THE OMEN	4 TAKE THE LEAD	5 X-MEN: THE LAST STAND	
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 THE OMEN	2 CARS	3 FAILURE TO LAUNCH	4 AQUAMARINE / X-MEN
M2 MARKET! MARKET!	1 THE OMEN	2 CARS		
	3 TAKE THE LEAD	4 INSIDE MAN	5 X-MEN: THE LAST STAND	

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Kulokabildo.com Media Forum June 12, 2006	Alaska Yamoo: The Super Good Drink for Super Good Kids! June 12, 2006

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GALLERIA 632-9116

1 THE DA VINCI CODE • THX 12:30 3:40 6:50 10:00
2 CARS 11:40 2:15 4:50 7:25 10:00
3 THE INSIDE MAN 11:20 2:00 4:40 7:20 10:00
4 TAKE THE LEAD 11:40 2:15 4:50 7:25 10:00
5 THE OMEN 12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00
6 CHAOS 12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00
7 X-MEN 3 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
8 ALL ABOUT LOVE 12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00
9 MANAY PO 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
10 THE BENCHWARMERS 1:00 3:10 5:20 7:30 9:40

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 THE OMEN 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50
2 MANAY PO 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50
3 THE INSIDE MAN 12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00
4 ALL ABOUT LOVE 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50
5 TAKE THE LEAD 12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00
6 CARS
7 X-MEN 3 11:00 1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50

METRO EAST 682-8193 • 682-8199

1 THE INSIDE MAN 1:10 3:40 6:15 9:00
2 CARS 1:00 3.40 6:20 9:00
3 TAKE THE LEAD 12:50 3:35 6:20 9:05
4 THE DA VINCI CODE 12:00 3:00 6:00 9:00
5 MANAY PO 11:25 1:50 4:15 6:40 9:05
6 THE OMEN 11:05 1:35 4:05 6:35 9:05
7 X-MEN 3 11:40 2:00 4:20 6:40 9:10
8 ALL ABOUT LOVE 11:30 1:55 4:25 6:55 9:15

NOVALICHES 935-3231 / 935-3229-30

1 THE DA VINCI CODE
2 ALL ABOUT LOVE
3 X-MEN 3
4 CARS
5 MANAY PO
6 THE OMEN

CITISQUARE MALABON 288-2578 **PIONEER** 687-5378

1 ALL ABOUT LOVE
2 X-MEN 3
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE
1 THE INSIDE MAN
2 CARS
3 TAKE THE LEAD
4 THE OMEN

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1 CARS
2 ALL ABOUT LOVE
3 THE DA VINCI CODE
4 MANAY PO
5 AQUAMARINE / X-MEN 3

LIPA (043) 757-3664 (043) 312-5870

1 THE DA VINCI CODE
2 ALL ABOUT LOVE
3 SILENT HILL
4 MANAY PO
5 X-MEN 3

DASMARIÑAS (046) 852-2125 (046) 416-4332

1 MANAY PO
2 THE DA VINCI CODE
3 CARS
4 ALL ABOUT LOVE
5 AQUAMARINE

ANGELES (045) 892-2348

1 THE OMEN
2 ALL ABOUT LOVE
3 MANAY PO
4 CARS

IMUS (046) 875-3838 (046) 471-6188

1 THE OMEN
2 CARS
3 MANAY PO
4 ALL ABOUT LOVE
5 X-MEN 3
6 THE DA VINCI CODE

STARMILLS (045) 875-1927 (045) 961-5270

1 CARS
2 THE DA VINCI CODE
3 ALL ABOUT LOVE
4 MANAY PO
5 X-MEN 3
6 THE OMEN

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1 AQUAMARINE
2 ALL ABOUT LOVE
3 BANDIDAS
4 THE DA VINCI CODE
5 X-MEN 3
6 OVER THE HEDGE

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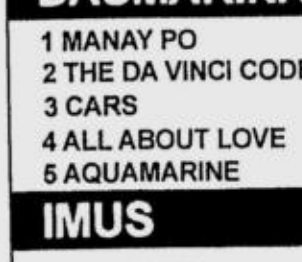
1 X-MEN 3
2 ALL ABOUT LOVE
3 MANAY PO
4 THE DA VINCI CODE
5 FAILURE TO LAUNCH
6 REINCARNATION



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1 FRENCH FILM FESTIVAL
2 CARS MTRCB: GP 11:40, 2:15, 4:50, 7:25, 10:00
3 OMEN 666 MTRCB: R-13 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00
4 THE INSIDE MAN MTRCB: PG-13 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00
PREMIERE THEATRE: TAKE THE LEAD / XMEN 3 1:25, 6:35 / 4:00, 9:10 MTRCB: PG-13
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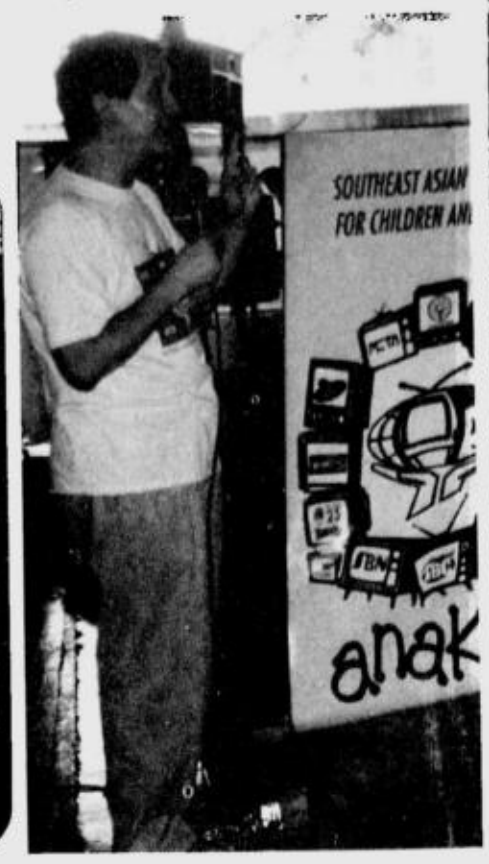
Shangri-La Plaza



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1 (DOLBY) FRENCH FILM FESTIVAL
2 (DOLBY) CARS GP
3 (DOLBY) OMEN 666 R13
4 (DOLBY) TH E INSIDE MAN PG13

PREMIERE
(DOLBY) TAKE THE LEAD PG13
X-MEN 3 PG13

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1 (DTS) TAKE THE LEAD
2 (SDDS) THE DA VINCI CODE
3 (DTS) THE BENCHWARMERS
4 GOLD (DTS) X - MEN - 3
5 GOLD (DOLBY) CARS
6 GOLD (SDDS) THE INSIDE MAN
7 GOLD (DOLBY) THE OMEN 666
8 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) CHAOS
9 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) ALL ABOUT LOVE
10 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) MANAY PO

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2 (DOLBY) CARS
3 (DOLBY) TAKE THE LEAD CARS
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Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216

1 CARS
2 THE OMEN 666
3 ALL ABOUT LOVE
4 THE INSIDE MAN

Blue Wave
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927

1 (DOLBY) X - MEN - 3
2 (DOLBY) MANAY PO
3 (DOLBY) CARS
4 (DOLBY) THE OMEN 666

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto tel 7334228

1 (DOLBY) THE OMEN 666
2 TAKE THE LEAD
3 ALL ABOUT LOVE
4 X - MEN - 3
5 THE INSIDE MAN

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 MANAY PO
2 (DTS) ALL ABOUT LOVE
3 (DOLBY) X - MEN - 3
4 CARS

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Binan) tel. (049) 4111146
1 MANAY PO
2 (DOLBY) CARS
3 (DTS) X - MEN - 3
4 ALL ABOUT LOVE

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
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1 ALL ABOUT LOVE
2 MANAY PO
3 (DOLBY) THE POSEIDON

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1 MANAY PO
2 ALL ABOUT LOVE
3 (DOLBY) SILENT HILL
4 (DTS) X - MEN - 3

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
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1 X - MEN - 3
2 MANAY PO
3 (DOLBY) ALL ABOUT LOVE

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Gapan) tel. (044) 4867736
1 X - MEN - 3
2 MANAY PO

starmall
EDSA SHAW
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7266150

3 ALL ABOUT LOVE
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) THE DA VINCI CODE
5 MANAY PO

metropolis star cinema
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8504285, 5433994

1 MANAY PO
2 ALL ABOUT LOVE
3 THE OMEN 666
4 CARS

THEATRES
NE Pacific Mall Cabanatuan, Telephone No. (044) 600-3025

1 X - MEN - 3
2 ALL ABOUT LOVE
3 MANAY PO

PACIFIC MALL LUCENA CINEMAGIC
Pacific Mall Lucena Tel (042) 660-5271

1 X - MEN - 3
2 ALL ABOUT LOVE
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

MARINE TIPTAN
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1 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE-3
2 ALL ABOUT LOVE
3 X - MEN - 3
4 RESERVED

Masagana CINEMA
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1 ALL ABOUT LOVE
2 CHAOS
3 MANAY PO

Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)- (4449346)

1 THE OMEN 666
2 THE DA VINCI CODE

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX) CARS
2 MANAY PO
3 (DTS EX) THE OMEN 666
4 ALL ABOUT LOVE

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1 MANAY PO
2 THE DA VINCI CODE

Lianas Cinema
(Pasig) tel 640.4748
1 X - MEN - 3
2 AQUAMARINE

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 (SDDS) POSEIDON
2 SENSES
3 BANDEDAS
4 (DTS) DALAGITA

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 (DOLBY) OBSESSION
2 ALL ABOUT LOVE
3 (DTS) X - MEN - 3
4 MANAY PO
5 CARS

Fiesta World Mall
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4 X - MEN - 3

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1 X - MEN - 3
2 KAULAYAW

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

MAG HATOL, SEAFCTV secretary general

Kid TV wins...

From page A2-3

programs are suitable for child viewing, and that guidance is needed so kids understand what they see on TV.

The jurors were divided into several groups and given survey sheets to accomplish.

Each group was assigned to watch one program. The jurors were asked to watch a few minutes of the program and write down his observations. They then rated the show against a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the highest grade.

According to Cruz, TV programs go through various levels of evaluation. Second level judging is done by psychologists, advertisers and other professionals who scrutinize programs from various vantage points such as moral slant, artistic merit, educational content, cultural relevance.

Mom congress

Programs that pass the second level are then endorsed to the SEAFCTV board, which formally declares them winners of the Anak TV Seal.

Earlier, at the Mindanao Polytechnic State College, Anson-Roa and SEAFCTV president Ed Roces took part in the first "SuperMom's Congress."

Anson-Roa and Roces spoke with the members of the Supermom's Club, an organization that works to empower women, especially mothers. The club, under the aegis of Southern Broadcasting Network, is also in cities like Cebu, Bacolod, Davao, Tarlac and Naga.

"You tell us which programs are good for your children. It's your right, and not of the TV networks," Roces told a group of over a thousand. "Together, we can change the landscape of TV."

The event had for its theme, "Mother as Prime Mover of Characters in Families."

Anson-Roa also took part in awarding "Talamdong Inahan (Bukod-tanging Ina)" citations to 10 exemplary mothers. The award, conceptualized by Supermom's Club, is given annually to women residents of Cagayan de Oro City.

Not that big a deal

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

LAST JUNE 5, ABS-CBN LAUNCHED ITS NEW evening game show, "Kapamilya, Deal Or No Deal," with **Kris Aquino** as host.

The show enables contestants to win as much as P2 million, but is inherently not all that exciting because it depends mostly on plain luck. Here's how it works:

Twenty-six lovely ladies each carry in a briefcase that contains a figure running from as low as P1 to as high as the P2 M top pot.

The celebrity contestant selects one of the briefcases, and is sequentially able to open the remaining containers, in diminishing batches of six, five, four, three and two.

As the briefcase are opened, the amounts they contain are taken out of contention. The contestant is lucky if the revealed amounts are small, because that means that his chances of winning big improve.

On the other hand, if the big amounts are sequentially taken out of contention, the contestant gets worried, because that means that, after all is said and done, he could go home with P1,000—or even less!

To make things more eventful, there's a silhouetted Banker who periodically calls Kris up to offer a certain amount for the unknown contents of the contestant's briefcase.

As of last viewing however, the Banker has been less than lavishly generous, with his biggest bid to date just P107,000.

Since the Banker's offers aren't all that enticing, contestants are tempted to keep playing, with mixed results.

The first contestant, **May Rivera**, won only P50,000 after all that wear and tear, while the second contestant, **Rico Robles**, opted to settle for the P107,000 that the Banker offered him for his briefcase.

—A good thing, too, because it turned out that the case actually contained only P150!

As you can see, luck is the show's primary component. A contestant is lucky if the briefcase he chooses contains a huge amount; he's unlucky if it holds only a few hundred pesos and he opts to hold on to it instead of "selling" its contents to the "Banker."

This being the case, "Deal or No Deal" isn't all that spellbinding and empathetic, because much of each show's final outcome is decided by the contestant's initial choice of briefcase.

As a result, the impact of a specific "round" depends greatly on the contestant's personality, and his ability to elicit viewers' interest and empathy.

This is partly encouraged by the contestant's financial needs, which stoke and intensify his determination to win big.

However, since practically every contestant has money problems, their needs soon cancel each other out, so viewers' interest is elicited mostly by the contestant's personality.

Thus far, that hasn't been a strong incentive, so the game show's empathy factor has remained low.

Host Kris Aquino does her level best to energize the proceedings, but the game show's format limits her effectivity. There are just so many different ways to say "open the briefcase!", after all...

'United 93'

"UNITED 93," a spellbinding film that meticulously dramatizes true events as the fate of the fourth hijacked plane unfolded on Sept. 11, 2001, will be screened worldwide starting July 5.

Director **Paul Greengrass** ("The Bourne Identity") had the full support of the victims' families, as well as a number of the flight controllers, who assumed the same roles in the film.

Destined for the Capitol Dome in Washington DC, Flight 93 failed to reach its target, because passengers and crew worked heroically as a team to foil the hijackers.

Advance word on the movie has been resoundingly positive. USA Today: "Undeniably the most captivating film released this year." Rolling Stone: "A monumental achievement that stands above any film in 2006." The Chicago Tribune: "Absolutely extraordinary." News of the World: "Heartstopping cinema."

ON SEPTEMBER 11, 2001.
FOUR PLANES WERE HIJACKED.
THREE OF THEM REACHED THEIR TARGET.
THIS IS THE STORY OF THE FOURTH.
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"ABSOLUTELY EXTRAORDINARY"
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IT HAPPENED IN 1818
NOW IT'S HAPPENING AGAIN
AN AMERICAN HAUNTING
THE BELL WITCH STORY
OPENS JUNE 14

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She is the owner of Cozy Cone Motel and calls Lightning McQueen, "Stickers"
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Answer:

His unique ability is to change a flat tire at 2.5 seconds flat
Answer:

The quiet doctor who runs the local medical clinic, err, mechanic shop
Answer:

Radiator Springs's resident hippie, who endorses the natural benefits of organic fuel
Answer:

Send in your answers together with your name, address, age and contact number at your nearest SM Cinema branch or e-mail to moviead dicts_smcinema@yahoo.com. Ten (10) lucky winners will be chosen from all the entries received. Answers must all be correct in order to qualify. Multiple entries sent will only be counted as a single entry. Deadline for the submission of entries is on June 20, 2006.

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June 15 (Thursday) — Bacoor 11:00 a.m., Dasmariñas 1:00 p.m., Molino 3:00 p.m., Sta. Rosa 5:00 p.m.
June 17 (Saturday) — The Podium 7:00 p.m.

Garfield Megatour
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METRO MANILA

SM MALL OF ASIA
SAN MIGUEL Coca-Cola IMAX THEATER
EVEREST 11:00 2:00 5:00 8:00 11:00
NASCAR 3D 12:30 3:30 6:30 9:30
PREMIERE CINEMA: ALL ABOUT LOVE
DIRECTOR'S CLUB: XMEN III
CENTERSTAGE: RESERVED
THE OMEN
TAKE THE LEAD
INSIDE MAN
CARS
XMEN III
MANAY PO

THE PODIUM
CINEMA 1: INSIDE MAN
CINEMA 2: CARS

SM NORTH EDSA
XMEN III
ALL ABOUT LOVE
CARS
THE OMEN
MANAY PO
TAKE THE LEAD
M:I:III
INSIDE MAN

SM CITY BICUTAN
THE OMEN
CARS
ALL ABOUT LOVE
XMEN III

SM MEGACINEMA
CARS
INSIDE MAN
XMEN III
CENTER FOR POP MUSIC
CHAOS
THE OMEN
POSEIDON
BENCHWARMERS
TAKE THE LEAD
M:I:III
ALL ABOUT LOVE
MANAY

SM CITY SOUTHMALL
CARS
TAKE THE LEAD
THE OMEN
XMEN III
M:I:III
CHAOS
ALL ABOUT LOVE
INSIDE MAN
MANAY PO

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
BENCHWARMERS
CHAOS
INSIDE MAN
XMEN III
MANAY PO
THE OMEN
TAKE THE LEAD
CARS
ALL ABOUT LOVE
M:I:III
CARS
OVER THE HEDGE

SM CITY DASMARINAS
CARS
MANAY PO
ALL ABOUT LOVE
XMEN III

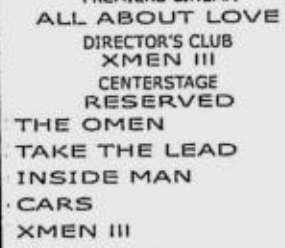
SM CITY STA. MESA
CARS
THE OMEN
XMEN III
TAKE THE LEAD
ALL ABOUT LOVE
MANAY PO
BENCHWARMERS
INSIDE MAN
M:I:III
CHAOS

SM CITY MANILA
THE OMEN
TAKE THE LEAD
CHAOS
INSIDE MAN
POSEIDON
XMEN III
ALL ABOUT LOVE
MANAY PO
OVER THE HEDGE
M:I:III
BENCH WARMERS
CARS

SM CITY SAN LAZARO
THE OMEN
TAKE THE LEAD
XMEN III
INSIDE MAN
CARS
ALL BOUT LOVE

SM SUPERCENTER VALENZUELA
CARS
THE OMEN
XMEN III
ALL ABOUT LOVE

SM CITY SUCAT
MANAY PO
XMEN III
CARS
THE OMEN



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LUZON

SM CITY BAGUIO
CARS
THE OMEN
ALL ABPOUT LOVE
XMEN III

SM CITY MARILAO
CARS
ALL ABOUT LOVE
MANAY PO
XMEN III

SM CITY BACOOR
BENCHWARMERS
M:I:III
CARS
XMEN III
THE OMEN
ALL ABOUT LOVE
MANAY PO
CHAOS

SM CITY CEBU
XMEN III
CARS
THE OMEN
FAILURE TO LAUNCH
AQUAMARINE
BANDIDAS
ALL ABOUT LOVE
M:I:III

SM CITY BAGUIO
XMEN III
ALL ABOUT LOVE
SENTINEL
MANAY PO

SM CITY LUCENA
XMEN II
ALL ABOUT LOVE
MANAY PO
BENCHWARMERS

SM CITY CLARK
THE OMEN
XMEN III
CARS
MANAY PO
REINCARNATION
ALL ABOUT LOVE

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY ILOILO
FAILURE TO LAUNCH
RESERVED
ALL ABOUT LOVE
M:I:III
MANAY PO
XMEN III
RESERVED
REINCARNATION

SM CITY PAMPANGA
THE OMEN
CARS
XMEN III
MANAY PO
REINCARNATION
ALL ABOUT LOVE

SM CITY MOLINO
ALL ABOUT LOVE
XMEN III
MANAY PO
CHAOS

SM CITY STA. ROSA
MANAY PO
ALL ABOUT LOVE
CARS
XMEN III

SM CITY CABANATUAN
XMEN III
SILENT HILL
ALL ABOUT LOVE
THE OMEN
CARS
MANAY PO

SM CITY CAGAYAN
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ENTERTAINMENT

Last call for summer

MAUI Taylor

WHAT HAPPENS TO SHOW BIZ bikini babes when summer is over and the party people leave Boracay?

They carry on wearing bikinis, that's what.

In Metro Manila.

At parties in spiffy restaurants.

Take Viva Hot Babe Sheree and

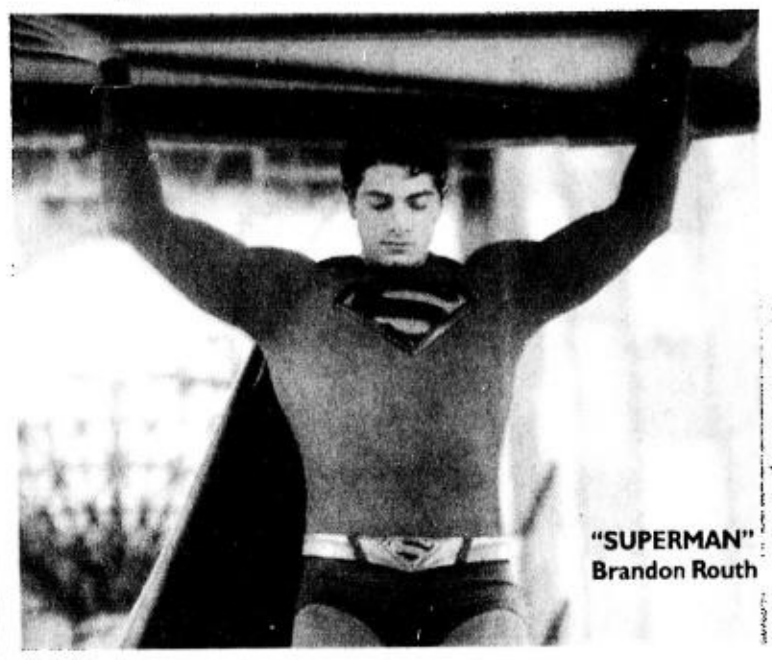
RUSHES

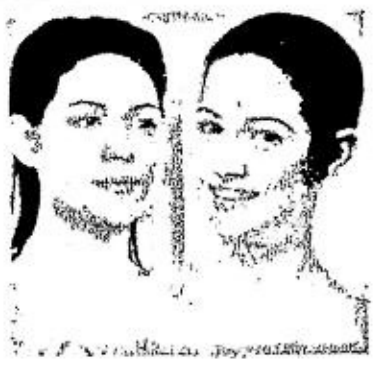
Maui Taylor, shown here at Manual magazine's summer's end party last week at Fiamma in Makati City.

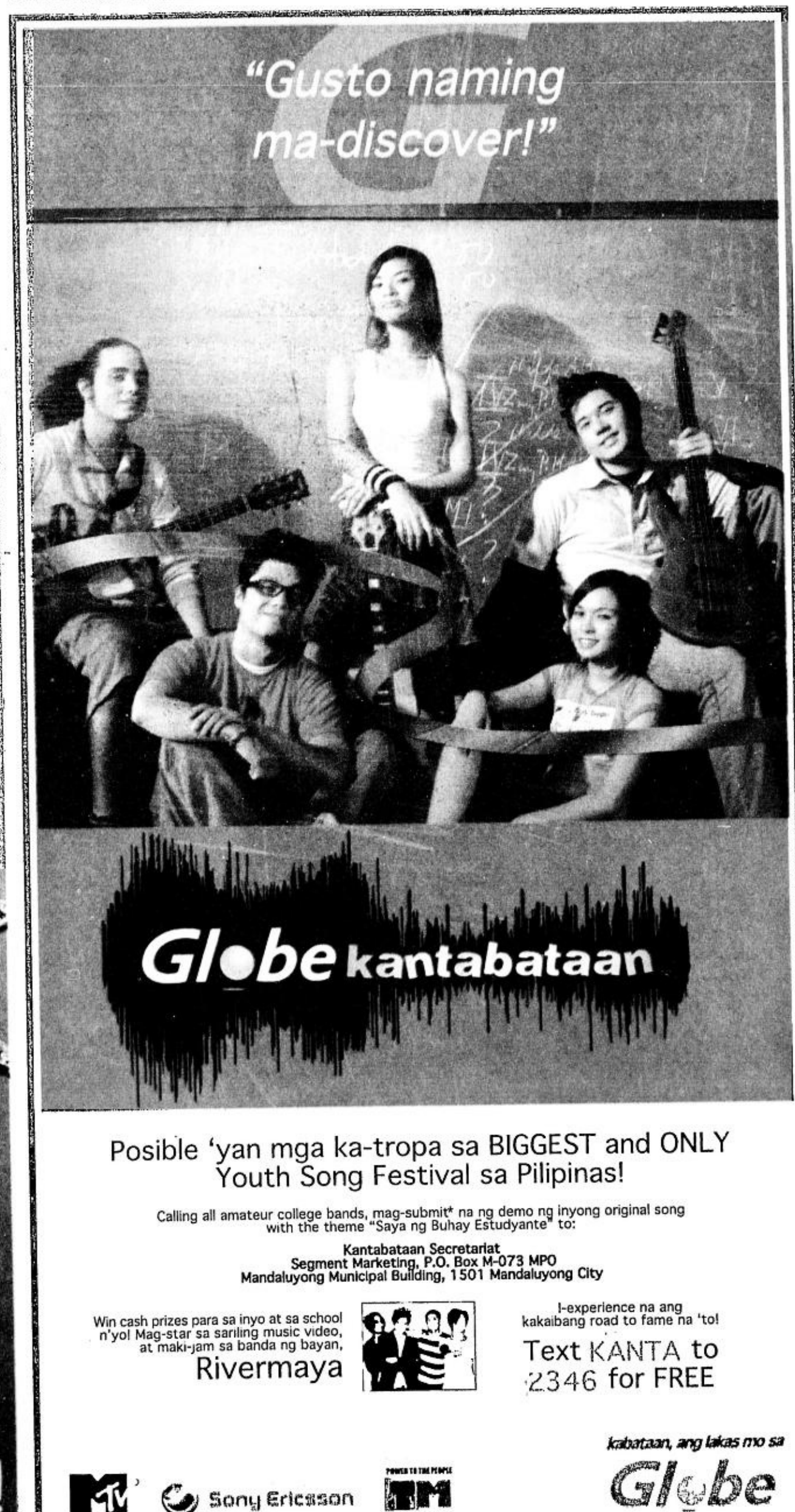
Actually, the girls modeled bikinis and flipflops during the party. They reportedly caused a traffic jam on Jupiter Street. You think anyone minded?

Before & after

This is Bea Alonzo before and after—guess which is which—the


"SUPERMAN" Brandon Routh


BEA Alonzo



MERYL Streep

ad shoot for Céleteque skin care line. Bea was the ideal subject, we heard —up at 5 a.m. for a 7 a.m. call slip.

Super... gay?

LOS ANGELES —After weeks of Internet buzz that the new Superman movie portrays the Man of Steel as gay, the director of the film, Bryan Singer, has issued a strong denial, saying, "[Superman] is probably the most heterosexual character in any movie I've ever made."

So he wears a leotard and flies around in a red cape. Big deal, Singer said, noting Spider-Man wears tights. The X-Men do too, and they aren't gay. Singer ought to know, he directed 2000's "X-Men" movie and 2003's "X2: X-Men United." *Reuters*

The mission

COSTUME designer Patricia Field (Emmy Award winner for "Sex in the City"), on her work in "Devil Wears Prada":

"Hopefully, we can expect Meryl Streep looking beautiful, which was one of the most exciting part of this project for me. I felt that was my mission."

Talking to herself

JENNIFER Love Hewitt, after her television series, "The Ghost Whisperer": "I'm really talking to myself a lot these days."

Like a guy

LINDSAY Lohan, on relationships: "I've become like the guy... lately, I just cannot be in a monogamous relationship."

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MONDAY, JUNE 12, 2006

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

B1

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BUSINESS

Editor Raul O. Marcelo • Assistant Editor Corrie S. Narisma

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Banks' bad loans rose to ₱154B in end-April

BSP says level remains manageable at 8.24% of total loans

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BAD LOANS OF Philippine commercial banks rose to 8.24 percent of their total outstanding loans as of end-April, up from the eight-year low of 8.01 percent in end-March, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas reported.

The BSP explained that total loans contracted while the soured portion inched up, resulting in the month-on-month increase in the non-performing loans (NPL) ratio.

But it noted that the banking system was able to maintain a single-digit NPL ratio for nearly a year now and that the NPL ratio as of end-April this year was 3 percentage points better than the 11.24 percent ratio a year ago.

The BSP also revised the end-March NPL ratio, earlier reported at 8.26 percent due to banks' amended NPL and total loan portfolio figures.

In peso terms, the NPLs amounted to P154.11 billion against the total loan portfolio of P1.87 trillion as of end-April this year.

"The month-on-month change in NPL ratio was driven by the slowdown in interbank lending activities that brought the industry's total loan portfolio lower by 1.9 percent, as well as the 0.9-percent increase in NPLs," the BSP explained.

Excluding interbank lending, the industry's total loan portfolio went up by 1.4 percent, leading to a reduction in the NPL ratio to 9.95 percent from 9.99 percent in the previous month.

Meanwhile, the ratio of restructured loans to total loans climbed to 5.33 percent from a month ago's 5.2 percent. Restruc-

BANKS'/ B2

WHAT'S INSIDE

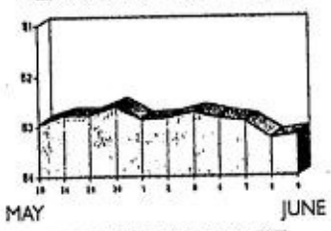
SC spanks PCGG, Sandigan /B3

Finance favors compromise deals on big tax disputes /B6

Cell phone penetration rate seen to peak at 50% /B14

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱53.17 = $1

As of 5 p.m., June 9, 2006

¥113.91 = $1

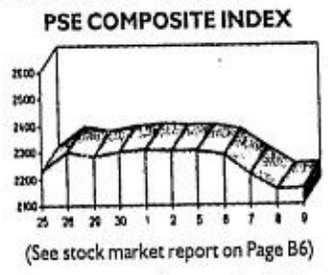
As of 5 p.m., June 9, 2006

GOLD: $607.10-607.60

per ounce Hong Kong, June 9, 2006

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B6)

Stocks seen headed lower

STOCK PRICES ARE STILL EXPECTED TO head south over jitters as to the direction of interest rates this month.

However, some fund managers said the market's selloff last week might open buying windows for bargain hunters.

The market is closed today as the country celebrates Independence Day.

Investors last week bore the brunt of a downtrend in global markets, which sent the Philippine Stock Exchange Index (PSEI) lower by 6.3 percent or 144.67 points to 2,159.50.

"The bad news is the sell-off had left a negative imprint on the market. The negative psychological impact of the sell-off could remain imbedded on the minds of investors, who are expected to shy away from equities investments for the meantime," AB Capital Securities said in a weekly market note.

AB Capital added that markets abroad were hobbled by uncertainties on the fate of interest rates.

"The consensus view is that interest rates are on the way up. One key event that investors are waiting for is the next US Federal Open Market Committee meeting, which will be at the end of the month. This could create a cloud of lingering uncertainty as we are still three weeks away from the next Fed meeting. Technically, the main composite index is trying to hold off the selling and stay above its critical one-year moving average at 2,100," AB Capital said.

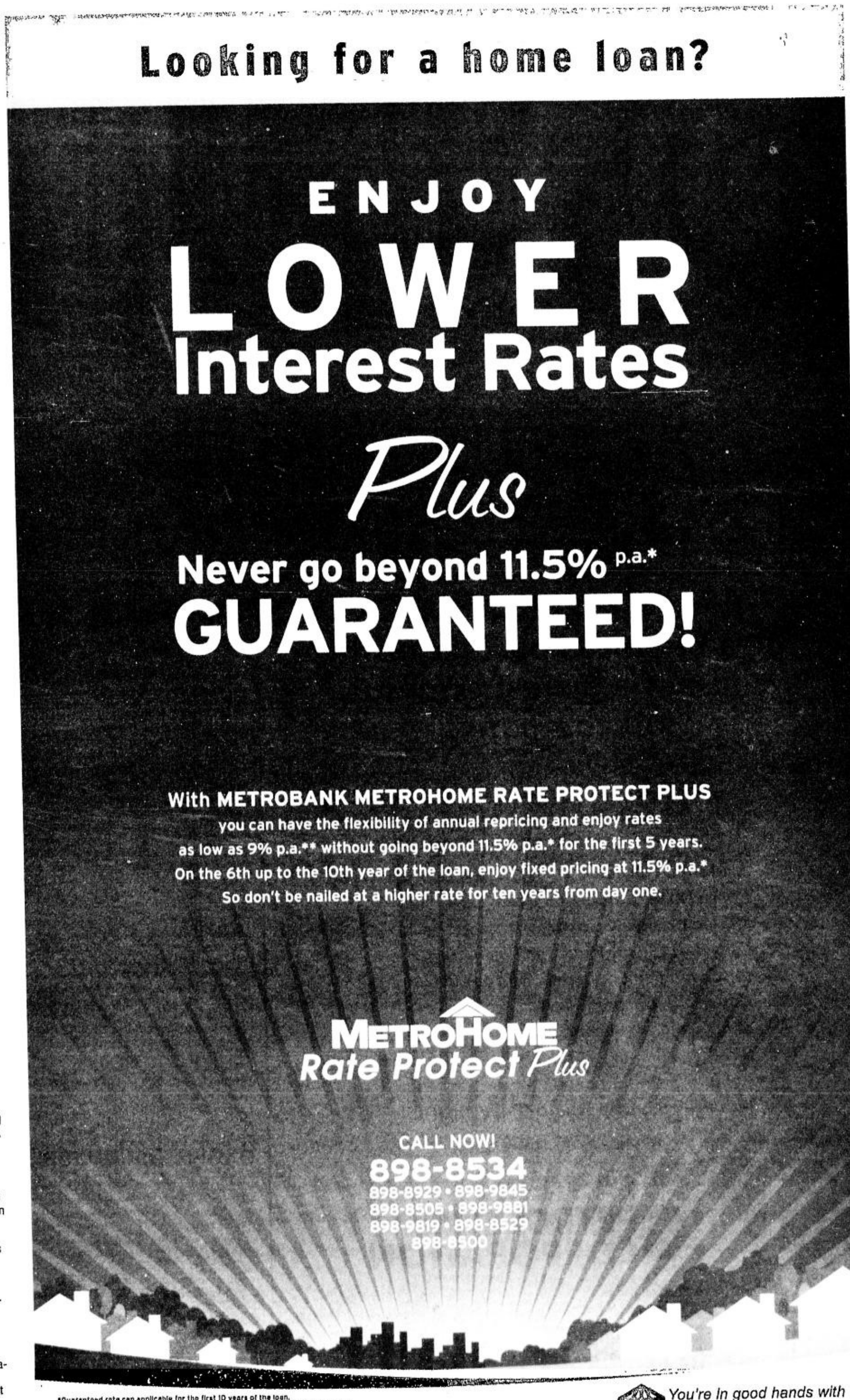
The brokerage added that the interest rate contagion similarly brought the peso lower in the past four weeks. The peso hit a 6-month low of 53.25 to a dollar last week.

Joseph Roxas, president at Eagle Equities Inc., said the market also fell sharply last week after the reported downgrade by US-based investment bank JP Morgan of the Philippine government's debt paper to "neutral" from "overweight" due to statements made by the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) that its collection target for the year was too high.

A "neutral" rating denotes a recommendation that investors hold off plans to buy or sell the bonds. An "overweight" assessment recommends buying them.

"(Last week) there was foreign selling on concerns over US interest rates and its pos-

SHARES/ B6



Bangko Sentral sees $2-B BOP surplus this year

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS expects to end the year with a balance-of-payments surplus of $2 billion, exceeding its conservative target of $1.6 billion, on robust export earnings and inflows from overseas Filipino workers.

This outlook was despite the BOP deficit of $277 million incurred for the month of April due to debt servicing outflows, the first shortfall seen this year.

"We expect to exceed the $1.6-billion target based on continued OFW (inflows) and exports, which are much stronger than originally anticipated notwithstanding volatilities in recent weeks," BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo said.

"We continue to see sustained inflows of portfolio and equity investments and then, of course, the national government will borrow so they (fiscal managers) will be able to finance their requirements," he explained.

The country's four-month BOP remained in a surplus of $1.84 billion despite the deficit in April because of the surpluses in earlier months, particularly in January when the Philippines sold $2.1 billion worth of global and euro bonds in the offshore capital market.

The BOP measures the foreign exchange transactions between the domestic economy and the rest of the world. Its major components are the current account and the capital and financial account.

The current account records trade in goods and services as well as cash transfers such as from overseas workers, while the capital and financial accounts include foreign investment flows.

Any transaction which gives rise to a payment by a Philippine resident like importation and debt servicing is a deficit item in the BOP while any transaction which gives rise to a receipt like exporting or inward remittance is a surplus item.

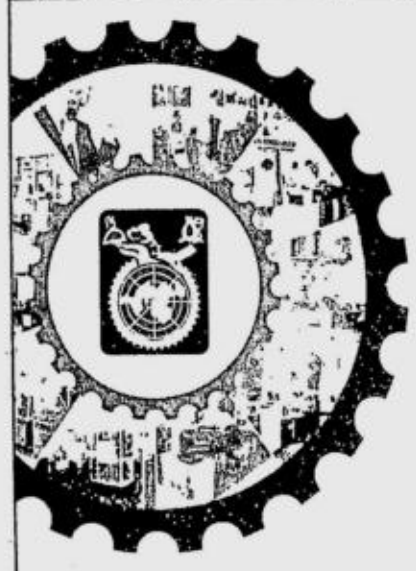
The BOP surplus of $1.6 billion projected by the BSP for this year is conservative versus the inflows seen so far this year and the $2.4-billion actual surplus posted last year. In the first two months of the year when the BSP first made the $1.6-billion surplus projection, the actual surplus was already at $2.03 billion.

Aside from a possible slowdown in demand for electronics abroad, the BSP was then bracing for less OFW inflows due to certain risks such as the stricter implementation across the globe of anti-money laundering measures and immigration policies.

In the case of inflows of hot money or foreign portfolio investments in stocks and peso-denominated government securities, the country had seen slower inflows so far this year compared to last year.

The government's front-loading of foreign borrowings swelled the BOP surplus in the first two months of the year but some of those inflows were programmed to be used to retire debts later this year, thus reducing the BOP surplus by year's end.

21-23 June 2006 • PICC Forum, Manila • 10:00 AM - 7:00 PM



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SEMINAR ROOM A (FREE ADMISSION)

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1:00 - 3:00 pm — Best Energy Management Practices for Steam Systems, Spirax Sarco Phils.
3:30 - 5:30 pm — CO2 Refrigerant for Industrial Refrigeration Seminar Engr. Cesar Luis Lim
JUNE 22, 2006
10:00 am - 12:00 nn — Industrial Refrigeration Seminar with Emphasis on Liquid Overfeed System, Engr. Cesar Luis Lim
12:30 - 2:30 pm — Savings Using Variable Frequency Drives, Jupp & Company
3:00 - 5:00 pm — Thermal Energy Storage Systems Seminar, Engr. Cesar Luis Lim
JUNE 23, 2006
10:00 am - 12:00 nn — Product Presentation Schneider Electric Philippines, Inc.
12:30 - 2:30 pm — Hydrocracked Lubricant Technology Engr. Johnson Lim, Mechatronics
4:00 - 5:00 pm — Product Presentation, Enertech Systems Industries, Inc.

ASHRAE SEMINAR ROOM B (A Special Seminar Series conducted in partnership with the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating & Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE)) (PhP500 PER TOPIC)
JUNE 21, 2006
1:00 - 5:30 pm — Air-Conditioning Cooling Load, Engr. Rosendo C. Perez, Jr.
JUNE 22, 2006
10:00 am - 12:00 nn — Air Conditioning Equipment Selection, Engr. Luci Limson, Concepcion Carrier
12:30 - 6:00 pm — Psychrometrics, Engr. Rosendo C. Perez, Jr.
JUNE 23, 2006
10:00 - 12:00 nn — Pumps, AMTEK
12:30 - 5:00 pm — Fans & Blowers, Design and Construction, Engr. Jason Tan, Niagara Industrial Equipment Corp.

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Cielito F. Habito

AS A FORMER ECONOMIC OFFICIAL MYSELF, I used to say—half tongue-in-cheek—that I had given up on our current generation of Filipinos, and would rather focus my energies on the next one, namely our children and youth. You can't teach old dogs new tricks, as the saying goes. Changing the deeply ingrained bad habits and attitudes of us adult Filipinos—and that means every one of us above 25 years old or so—often feels like an impossible dream. And so we look for hope to the "successor generation," the young people who will take over the leadership of the country in the not-too-distant future, and hope that they would be the ones to turn this country around.

Elusive MDGs

Trouble is, current trends bring me to an alarming observation: We could be throwing that hope away given the way we are failing to take care of that successor generation. Salvation from the "hope of the fatherland," as our national hero described them, would not come automatically. It is up to us adults to enable our successors to bring forth that hope.

Thus, it worries me a great deal to learn that in many (if not most) areas of the country, we are headed for failure in attaining the Millennium Development Goals. The MDGs comprise eight goals pledged by world leaders in the historic UN Millennium Summit to be achieved by 2015. These are the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, achieving universal primary education, eliminating gender disparities in education, reducing mortality rate of children under five years old, reducing maternal mortality, reversing the spread of deadly diseases like HIV/AIDS and malaria, ensuring environmental sustainability, and developing a global partnership for development. The goals have been translated into 18 measurable targets that countries are consciously integrating into their national development plans and poverty reduction strategies. All reflect or hinge on the welfare of our children and youth.

Worsening trends

A recent study commissioned by the Unicef to come up with a "Provincial MDG Report Card" for the Philippines came up with a startling observation: We are not even tracking our MDG performance regularly and systematically, and whatever data we do have indicate that we have been getting worse, not better, on some key MDG targets.

The most disturbing observations from the report card concern nutrition and school enrollment, both of which appear to have been worsening in recent years. While patchy, data on the proportion of underweight children show an increase over the '90s and through the turn of the millennium. Remarkably, even the progressive province of Bulacan had shown rising incidence of child malnutrition. The apparent explanation is the rapid influx of migrants into the province, lured by its bustling economy and improving social services, apart from its being a favored relocation site for resettled squatters from the city.

Ironically, improvements in the province's social services have been outstripped by rapidly rising demand due to such in-migration. The price of success, it seems, is even heavier challenges—a case of for whom much is given, much more is expected.

Clear link

The problem is that studies have established a clear link between child malnutrition and inferior school performance and intellectual ability among young children. Worse, the problem is occurring right at the most critical years of the children's intellectual development. Unless we act decisively, we risk throwing away an entire generation of Filipinos to intellectual mediocrity, if not inferiority, by sheer failure to feed them adequately. And with that goes our hope in the successor generation.

The other disturbing trend is the decline in net enrollment ratios in most provinces of the country. Figuring in separate news items last week were Cordillera and Negros Occidental, where it is not just the ratio but actual levels of school enrollment that have been declining over the past five years. Education authorities in both provinces point to economic hardship as a key culprit. On gender parity, our problem is actually the reverse of that elsewhere: Girls outnumber boys in our schools by a ratio of as much as 1.6 to 1 in some provinces. But having large numbers of Filipino boys out of school is just as alarming as having too many girls deprived of schooling in South Asia and Africa.

Lunch and learn

Meanwhile, Rep. Herminio Teves of Negros Oriental has spearheaded a program to provide free lunch to some 135,000 pupils in the province's 527 public elementary schools. The move was spurred by the dismal performance of the province's school children in various achievement tests, and the widespread problem of absenteeism, particularly in afternoon classes. Negros Oriental shows how this could be done without undue stress on the provincial budget, by tying the free lunch program to their successful school-based food production program called Gulayan at Palaisdaan Alay sa Kabataan (GPAK). GPAK has already won for the province the 2005 Galing Pook Award, and has helped augment the tight budgets of the province's public school system. And I have no doubt that the twin programs will help raise the Negrense children's school performance very palpably in the near future.

Now here is one case where a free lunch can make eminent sense.

Comments welcome at chabito@ateneo.edu

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BIR to clean up taxpayers' database

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE IS set to undertake major administrative reforms—including a cleanup of its taxpayers' database and adjustments in the way it conducts tax audit—as it struggles to meet its tax collection target for the year.

Revenue Commissioner Jose Mario Buñag said the BIR would establish the guidelines on its reform program with the help of tax experts to be sent by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) this month.

The IMF has committed to provide technical assistance to the Philippines, particularly related to enhancing revenue collection, to help address its need to improve its fiscal climate. Weak revenues have been partly blamed for the country's poor credit rating.

The IMF's technical assistance program would last for six months, but could be implemented three weeks at a time, Buñag said.

He said the BIR had to clean up its taxpayers' database to better monitor compliance. The cleanup would entail electronic linking of databases of all BIR offices nationwide, the BIR chief added.

The linkup would aid in the BIR's "third-party information" program, wherein the revenue agency validates the accuracy of incomes declared by a corporate taxpayers by matching these with the purchases declared by their clients.

Enhancing the BIR's database is also needed to make efficient its "industry benchmarking" auditing strategy, he said. Under this tax audit scheme, the BIR determines the average income and tax payments of businesses belonging to the same industry. A firm that declares an income and pays taxes much lower than the benchmark would be subject to tighter audit.

Buñag said the IMF's technical assistance would also cover amendments to its audit manual.

"Currently, they (BIR auditors) sit down on it (financial statements) until they trace the last peso of liability. What we need to do is to focus on big amounts of tax delinquency," Buñag said in a roundtable discussion with the INQUIRER's business section.

The BIR, the main revenue source of the government, was tasked to collect P78.6 billion in April but turned in only P71.3 billion, therefore registering a P7.3-billion shortfall during the month.

This prompted some officials to question the shortfall, which came despite the recent increase in the value-added tax and the corporate income tax rates.

But Buñag said impact of tax increases on revenue collection was not immediate. He added that aside from implementing administrative reforms, increasing the number of tax collectors was also needed to help the BIR meet its daunting task of collecting P675.4 billion this year.

"When they (government) set targets they want it achieved right away. They keep on asking us to increase tax collection, but there is no additional manpower," Buñag said.

Banks' bad loans . . .

From page B1

tured loans which turned sour again fell by 1.4 percent thereby improving the ratio to total restructured loans to 46.74 percent.

Total restructured loans as of end-April amounted to P100.31 billion, of which P46.88 billion were non-performing.

A debt restructuring can cover a whole range of debt concessions—including the stretching out of maturities and lowering of interest rates—to give the borrower some space and a chance to revive its business.

Meanwhile, holdings of real and other properties owned or acquired (Ropoa) declined by 0.1 percent over the month but this was accompanied by a 0.5-percent contraction in gross assets, bringing the gross Ropoa-to-assets ratio slightly higher at 4.96 percent from a month ago's 4.94 percent.

The banking system's non-performing assets—representing the combined bad loans and Ropoas—went up to 8.63 percent of total assets in end-April from 8.56 percent a month ago. It was, however, much better than the 10.04 percent a year ago.

These NPAs amounted to P341.09 billion against P339.98 billion in end-March, but down from P395.02 billion a year ago.

About 79 percent of NPLs and 41.94 percent of Ropoas were covered with loss provisions and reserves.

The BSP expects demand for loans to be boosted by favorable domestic interest rates and improved business sentiment as a result of steady progress in fiscal consolidation and other key economic reforms.

But so far, bank lending in the Philippines has remained anemic due to banks' high non-performing loans and assets, weak capital base and high lending rates despite falling treasury bill and bond yields.

SC spanks PCGG, Sandigan

THE SUPREME COURT GAVE THE judicial equivalent of spanking to the PCGG and the Sandiganbayan in its en banc decision ordering the return of Ferdinand Martin Romualdez to the Equitable PCIBank board.

"The court finds the actions of PCGG in this case distressing," said the high tribunal on Friday.

"Its actions and resort to unconventional modes of relief toward the end of depriving (the Romualdez holding company) the right to vote its shares, notwithstanding two Sandiganbayan rulings recognizing such right, are tantamount to abuse of the judicial process."

The high court particularly cited the letter of PCGG Commissioner William Dichoso to Equitable PCIBank, advising the bank board that the Sandigan had issued an order preventing Romualdez from voting his family's 7.13-percent stake in the May 23 meeting.

"No such temporary restraining order was issued...," the high court said, adding that the "ultimate blame ... on the resultant farce" must be foisted on the Sandigan.

The high court also noted the specious reasoning of Accra, counsel for Equitable PCIBank, that the 1998 Sandigan resolution that allowed the Romualdezes to vote their sequestered shares since then was good for that year's shareholders' meeting only.

Even then, the high court added, the Sandigan by 2003 had already nullified the 1986 sequestration order on the Romualdez shares.

"At bare minimum, considering the accomplished modification and virtual termination of the (Sandiganbayan) restraining order as of 2003, execution of the 1995 decision (of the Supreme Court, which enjoined the Romualdezes from voting the sequestered shares) in 2006 cannot possibly contemplate the revival of the TRO" against the Romualdezes, the high tribunal said.

All the justices, except for Consuelo Ynares-Santiago who was on leave and Adolfo Azcuna who recused himself for having been a former Romualdez counsel, agreed with the ponente, Dante Tinga.

According to the grapevine, Equitable PCIBank will hold a board meeting tomorrow to decide who among them will give up his/her seat to pave the way for the return of its former vice chair.

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

Advertising Mayday

COMPETING consumer giants P&G and Unilever both reduced their TV ad placements in May by more than 25 percent year-on-year, according to the Nielsen Media Research.

As a result of the reduced commercial load, GMA's so-called "ad minutes" shrank by 5 percent, year-on-year, while ABS-CBN, surprisingly, even posted a modest 4-percent growth.

It was not immediately clear why the two multinationals slashed their advertising spending last month, and how much of the cutback was based, if ever, on seasonality. Still, even McDonald's and San Miguel, which rely more on broadcast than print ads, also slashed their TV placements last month by about 6 percent.

Money-go-round

• CAUGHT by the market's sudden shakeout, Metrobank has indefinitely postponed its plan to offer 204 million shares, which would have raised about P9 billion in fresh capital for the country's largest bank.

• THE SM Group is conducting due diligence on the capital-starved PriceSmart warehouse chain.

Heard through the grapevine

AND speaking of judicial farce, instead of complying with the SEC order to hold the much-delayed annual meeting of listed Philcomsat Holdings, Commissioner Ricardo Abcede has been seen holding extended meetings in the Pacific Star building with the same Malacañang nominees who had been found to have misled both the Supreme Court and the Sandiganbayan as to the extent of actual government control in the Philcomsat Group.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@pldtdsl.net or cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com)

Gov't plans to auction Calaca power plant in September

By Abigail L. Ho

AFTER TWO FAILED AUCTIONS, THE POWER Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM) may again place the 600-megawatt (MW) Calaca coal-fired power plant on the auction block this September.

PSALM vice president for asset management and electricity trading Froilan Tampinco said that while the date for the actual auction would have to be firmed up, it would most likely take place in September.

Bidding for the 112-MW Pantabangan-Masiway hydropower plants and the 660-MW Tiwi-Makban geothermal facility would also be scheduled soon, he said.

In an earlier interview, First Gen Corp. vice chair and chief executive Peter Garrucho said the company remained interested in the Calaca plant.

First Gen arm First Generation Luzon Power Corp. was one of two groups who bid for the generation asset during the second auction held last May.

The bidding was declared a failure as First Gen and DMCI Holdings Inc.'s bids both fell short of PSALM's $288-million "reserve price" or floor price for the plant.

PSALM has yet to finalize details of how it would go about auctioning the plant for the third time.

Garrucho said First Gen was willing to negotiate with PSALM for the plant. It had already made its intentions known to the privatization body via a letter.

"I think the first step, really, is for PSALM to say, yes, we're willing to negotiate not just with one party, but maybe with a (group of investors)," he said.

Asked whether or not it was possible for First Gen to form a partnership with DMCI Holdings, he said it was still too early to tell.

However, he admitted that DMCI could play a vital role in Calaca as it was itself a coal supplier.

"But, of course, there may be other potential partners that can bring some other things to the table. Although we are willing to do it alone, and we can do it alone," he said.

He related that First Gen had the funds to acquire the plant even without a partner, as well as the technology to run the plant alone.

Asked whether or not First Gen would be willing to raise its bid to meet PSALM's $288-million reserve price for the generation facility, he did not give a categorical answer, saying only that he believed the company's bid of $176.6 million was quite reasonable.

"We like the asset, as we figure we will be in an excellent position to provide very cheap power to the market. But of course the economics has to fall into place," he said.

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UST hospital sees $40M in medical tourism profit

A LEADING PRIVATE HOSPITAL in Manila, with its pool of medical and surgical talent, has the potential to earn more than $40 million or P2 billion a year in revenues from medical tourism based on agreements negotiated between the hospital and several international healthcare buyers.

This was the projection of Dr. Cenon R. Alfonso, chief executive of The University of Santo Tomas Hospital, following negotiations with foreign healthcare buyers at the First World Health Tourism Congress of 2006 in Wiesbaden, Germany, last May. The congress brought together 51 healthcare providers and 110 healthcare buyers from all over the world.

The UST Hospital, in partnership with the National Association of Independent Travel Agencies, was made the model of the First World Tourism Congress as the tandem provided the most comprehensive approach to inquiries from healthcare buyers.

"Medical tourism is not just about providing attractively priced medical procedures to foreign patients," according to Alfonso. "It also means arranging for these foreign patients and their companions their plane fare, accommodations before and after the medical procedure and—here is the tourism part—introducing the tourist attractions of the Philippines, especially during their recuperation."

The UST Hospital CEO said the most in-demand services in medical tourism now were cancer management, endocrine and metabolism medicine, transplants and ophthalmological services.

"It so happens that our hospital is at the technological forefront in these fields. It's simply a matter of marketing ourselves to the world properly," he said.

Microsoft helps technology school standardize network

MANAGING A NETWORK WITH multiple operating systems can be a headache for many companies, making networks of all sizes excessively complicated and inefficient. For a technology-focused school, the pressure to be fully automated and systems-efficient is greater.

"We had deployed (different) software for cost-efficiency but always experienced operational problems because of unreliability and user-resistance. After standardizing on Microsoft, it was a different story. Now we're developing new solutions instead of troubleshooting system problems," said Christopher dela Rosa, IT director at Mapua Institute of Technology.

MIT is an 81-year-old school which prides itself with the quality of its architecture and engineering programs. Acquired by the Yuchengco group through a company now known as iPeople Inc., MIT today is the biggest engineering school in the Philippines.

"Our operations and expanding network demand an operating system that allows us to consolidate our applications and the majority of our networking infrastructure into a single platform to drive down management costs. Standardizing on Microsoft's operating systems has solved our operational problems without spending too much. Having integrated productivity applications, our network has been easy to manage, user productivity has increased, and use of the technology has become automatic," added Dela Rosa.

"Organizations like MIT are beginning to discover that the features of Microsoft software can also solve many network problems. With Windows, network administrators can run their entire network, desktops and laptops on one highly reliable, cost-efficient operating system," said Michelle Casio, platform strategy manager

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State banks await concrete plan on OFW bank

DBP, LBP to provide seed capital, transfer existing remittance units to new bank

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE STATE-OWNED BANKS EYED to participate in the Malacañang-backed P1-billion Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) Bank want to see a concrete proposal from the government on the project before making any investment decision.

"We're still trying to see what Postal Bank can offer us in terms of infrastructure and distribution. At this point in time, unless there's a concrete proposal on the table, we'll just continue with what we're doing," said Development Bank of the Philippines president Reynaldo David.

David announced plans to invest P300 million to beef up its own OFW remittance business. The bank has signed up correspondent banks to boost its cash transfer operations in key offshore markets.

It was earlier reported that DBP and Land Bank of the Philippines were planning to jointly acquire up to 70 percent of the proposed OFW Bank to be created out of niche lender Philippine Postal Bank.

DBP and Landbank were eyed to provide the seed capital needed by OFW Bank, with equity infusion of P350 million each. PostalBank, for its part, will contribute P300 million out of its existing resources to meet the proposed capitalization of P1 billion.

The original plan had the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration shouldering the entire P1-billion capitalization but there were legal questions on the plan.

The alternative scheme was for government banks to infuse the P1 billion, while OWWA would contribute another P1 billion later by subscribing to preferred shares.

When everything was ready, David said DBP could fold into the new bank the state bank's remittance operations and its people could also be consolidated.

"We're amenable, there's no doubt about it. We feel they have the distribution capability. But it's a long way to go," David said.

Government banks were invited to invest in the proposed OFW Bank. The banks were asked to pool their resources under one entity that will be focused on serving the interest of migrant Filipino workers.

Landbank and DBP were expected not only to provide fresh capital but also transfer their existing remittance operations to OFW Bank. The state banks will have the management control in the new bank.

Last March, Malacañang announced the transformation of Postal Bank into an OFW Bank.

Press Secretary and Presidential Spokesperson Ignacio R. Bunye said: "Given the vital role that OFWs play in strengthening the peso and shoring up international dollar reserves, it is only fitting that they are given access to a bank that will attend to their special needs."

President Macapagal-Arroyo wants the OFW Bank to charge less service fees in handling remittances of Filipino workers abroad.

The Philippines has 8.5 million workers deployed abroad, of which three million are permanent residents. The five million non-permanent resident workers represent 14 percent of the country's labor force.

RP-CHINA BROTHERHOOD
Trade Secretary Peter B. Favila receives a token from Chinese Minister of Commerce Bo Xilai after signing a memorandum of understanding on the economic partnership between the Philippines and China. The MOU calls for a long-term framework that will define the partnership. The ministers also discussed China's possible investment in a mass housing program for informal settlers in Metro Manila.

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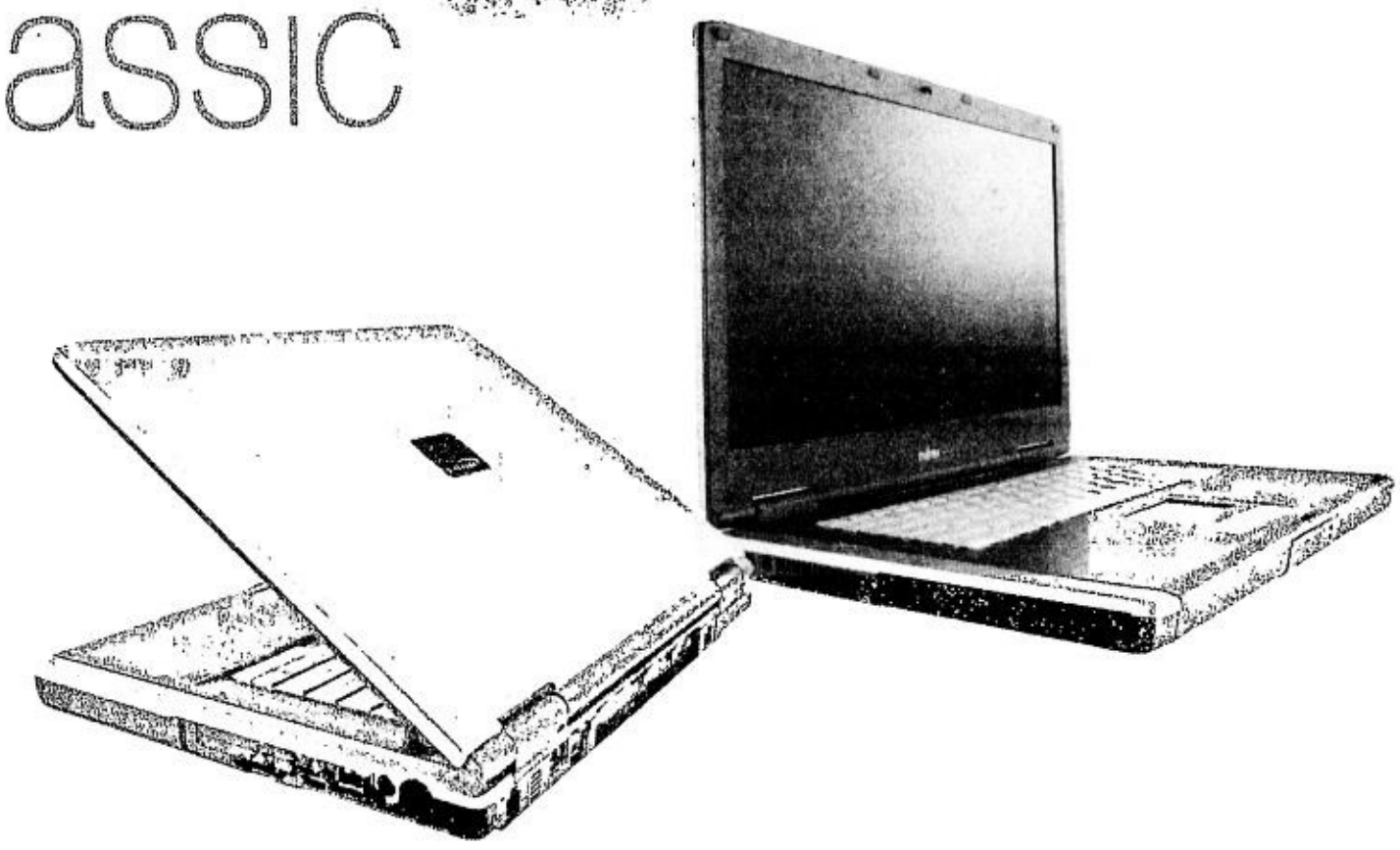

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MWCI pipeline expansion seen completed in Q4

By Christine A. Gaylican

LISTED WATER FIRM MANILA WATER COMpany Inc. (MWCI) targets to complete by the fourth quarter of the year three new pipeline expansion projects worth P2.85 billion that could bring in 237,000 new customers.

The east zone concessionaire recently started laying new pipelines connecting to the system residents of Antipolo, Mandaluyong and Montalban, MWCI president Antonino T. Aquino said in a briefing with analysts recently. These projects, he said, were scheduled for completion in the fourth quarter.

Aquino said the new lines would increase MWCI's billed volumes which presently stood at 864 million liters per day, serving 600,000 households or equivalent to 5 million customers.

The subsidiary of the Ayala Group took over the century-old system in the east zone from the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System. It has been spending about P2.5 billion a year for the replacement of more than 300 kilometers of aging pipelines. It is also installing 100 kilometers of additional pipelines this year.

Aquino said the move formed part of the effort to reduce the level of its nonrevenue water arising from illegal connections. The company's NRWs was down to 35.5 percent as of December 2005.

He noted that its NRW projects, wastewater and sewerage expansion accounted for a third of the company's capital investments, which were financed through internally generated funds and loans.

Aquino noted that cutting off illegal connections was only half of the battle in the water services business.

"The other half requires the company to make a big effort to prioritize its capital expenditure program," he said.

ERC officials back colleague

MEMBERS OF THE ENERGY REGULATORY Commission closed ranks behind a colleague who was being linked to a controversy involving the privatization National Power Corp.'s 800-megawatt Masinloc power plant in Zambales.

The ERC issued a resolution debunking "insinuations" linking ERC Commissioner Jesus Alcordo to YNN Holdings, which won the Masinloc plant bidding and now the main subject of the controversy.

The ERC expressed its "displeasure over apparent attempts at smearing the honor and reputation of its (ERC) members, particularly that of Commissioner Alcordo."

"The commission reiterated its faith in the integrity of Alcordo and in the transparency with which he has discharged his functions as a member of the commission," the ERC said in the resolution .

ERC Chair Rodolfo Albano earlier said the ERC had "nothing to do with the sale of Masinloc." The transaction, he said, was under the supervision of Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Corp. or PSALM.

Albano expressed disgust over the apparent attempts to drag the ERC into the Masinloc controversy.

The ERC also noted that Alcordo "had consistently inhibited himself from hearing, deliberations and decisions affecting corporations and interests with he may have been identified with in the past."

In an earlier radio interview, Alcordo said he had divested himself of any interest in a private corporation as early as 2002.

Rockwell to construct ₱7.5-B condo complex

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

ROCKWELL LAND CORP. OF THE LOPEZ Group of Companies is set to construct a P7.5-billion high-end condominium complex.

Benpres Holdings Corp. chair Oscar Lopez said that over the next four to five years, Benpres subsidiary Rockwell Land will work on a "sophisticated complex called "One Rockwell" that will enable the property firm to keep its premier position in the luxury condominium market."

The Lopez Group expects to sell One Rockwell by the end of 2009 and deliver the units by 2010.

Rockwell Land is the developer of Rockwell Center in Makati—a high-end commercial and residential complex. Rockwell Center has only three spaces left for development.

At present, Rockwell Land is scouring other locations in Metro Manila, hoping to pursue potential joint ventures with landowners.

These additional projects, which are targeted to be launched in the next two years, will cater to the middle market residential segment.

The company is also looking into developing residential leisure projects outside of Metro Manila, in tourism destinations such as Tagaytay, Baguio and Batangas.

The planned developments will be located in high-end exclusive location and will continue to carry Rockwell's quality seal.

Rockwell reported P2.55 billion in consolidated revenues in 2005, and a 21-percent growth in net income to P288.5 million last year.

Bent on building own network, Next Mobile presses 3G claim

By Daxim L. Lucas

TRUNK RADIO OPERATOR NEXT MOBILE Inc. remains committed to building its own third-generation (3G) mobile phone network, despite having been spurned by telecommunications regulators in its bid to join the exclusive club late last year.

In a telephone interview, Next Mobile president and CEO Mel Velarde said that his company will attempt once more to gain a 3G license if the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) will bid out the last available frequency for the new technology.

"We have to upgrade to 3G," he said, adding that the company has spent a substantial sum on its existing network infrastructure. "We have already invested $250 million over the last seven or eight years."

The 3G system is a new technology that allows mobile phone users to make video calls on their cellular phones, watch streaming video and live television broadcasts and surf the Internet at broadband speeds.

Earlier, NTC Commissioner Ronald O. Solis said that his office may opt to bid out the last available 3G license among the applicants that failed to make the cut during the first round of license awards in 2005.

Any such bidding will, however, have to wait for the results of a Congressional inquiry into the new scheme. Congressmen have questioned the NTC's decision to award licenses without the benefit of a public bidding—a decision they claim that had deprived the government of much-needed revenues.

Nonetheless, Velarde said his company is pressing its case before telecommunications regulators, saying that it has a greater claim to the fourth license which was awarded to Connectivity Unlimited Resource Enterprises (CURE) of former Trade Minister Roberto V. Ongpin.

"We filed with NTC a motion for reconsideration claiming that Next Mobile should be number four after Smart, Globe and Sun," he said in a separate text message. "CURE and MTI (Multimedia Telephony Inc.) can fight for [slot] number five. We have a better case than them."

Apart from Next Mobile, Solis said other losing bidders for the 3G licenses—Multimedia, Pacific Wireless Inc., AZ Communications Network Inc. and Bayan Telecommunications Inc.—have pending appeals with the commission, all of which are being held in abeyance pending the release of the Congressional inquiry's findings.

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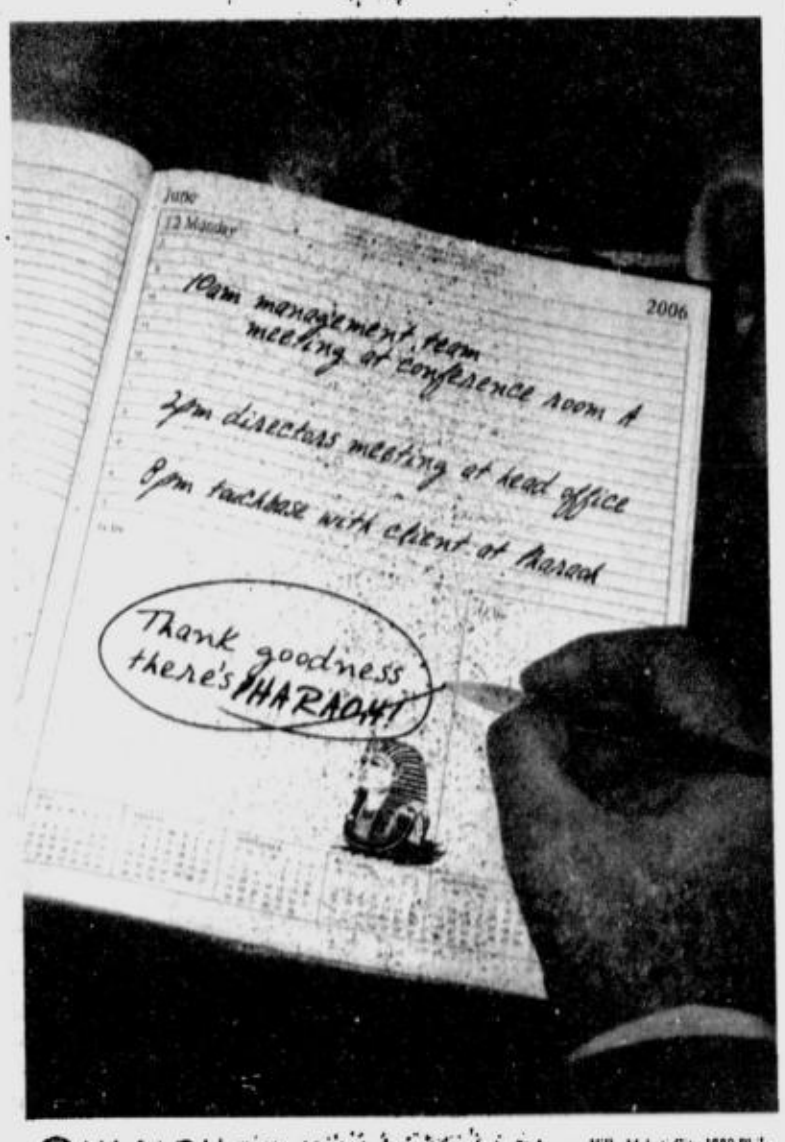

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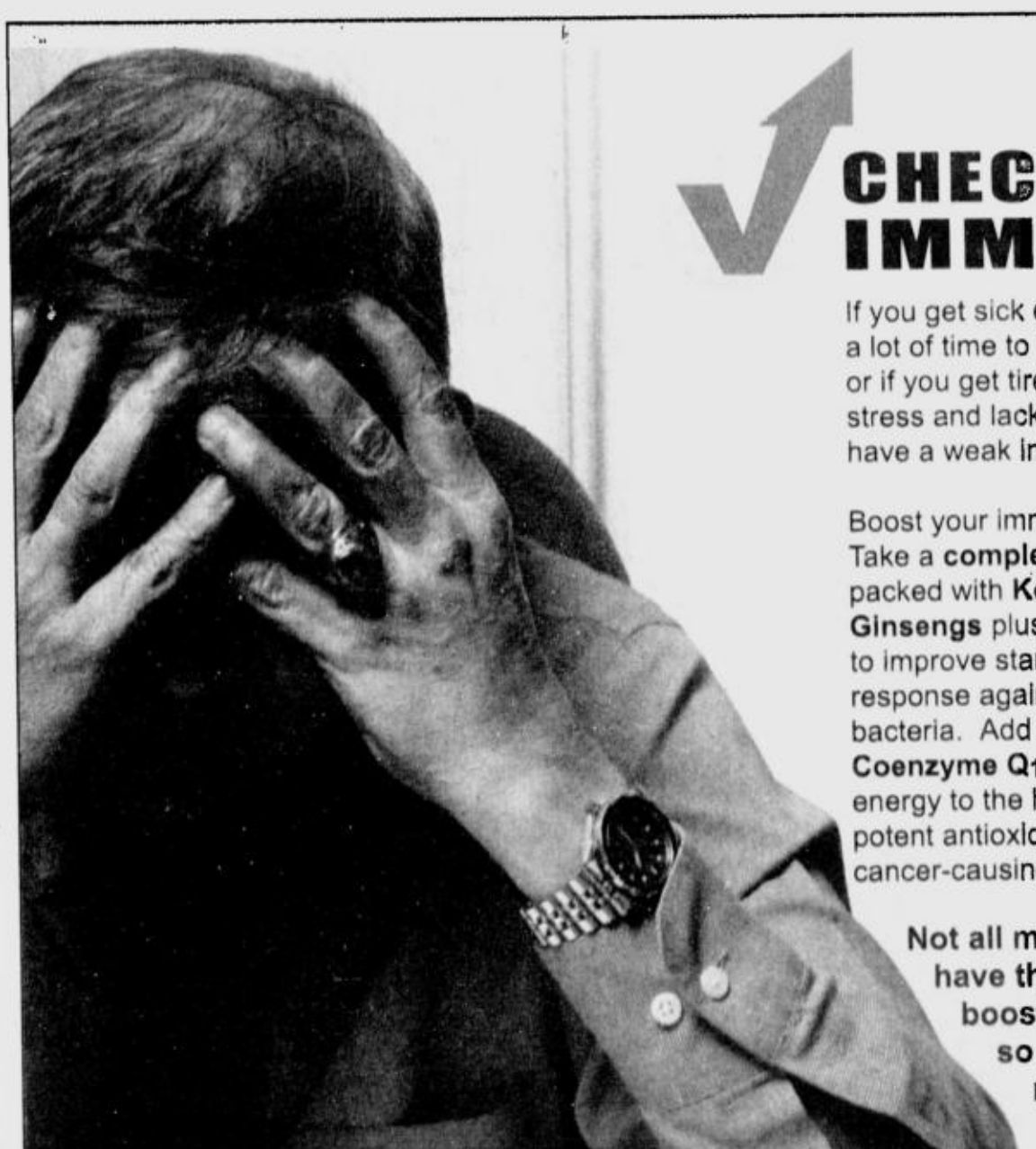

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Finance favors compromise deals on big tax disputes

Court battles over old cases seen a waste of time

By Michelle V. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE IS IN inclined to entertain compromise settlements of long overdue big-ticket tax disputes to help boost revenue collection and enable the government to meet this year's fiscal targets.

Finance Secretary Margarito Teves said he was scheduled to discuss with Revenue Commissioner Jose Mario Buñag the proposal for the BIR to enter into more compromise settlement deals.

Teves said that under the National Internal Revenue Code, the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR), an attached agency of the DOF, was allowed to enter into compromise deals with taxpayers if the tax disputes had remained deadlock because there was reasonable doubt on the validity of the tax liability assessment made by the BIR.

The law also allows the BIR to enter into a compromise when a taxpayer is proven incapable of paying the amount of tax assessment.

For taxpayers found incapable of paying, the BIR is allowed to offer a compromise of claiming only 10 percent of the amount of tax liability. For the others, the BIR may claim 40 percent.

"What we can do is move on and get an amount consistent with the law. We need to hit the (tax collection) target," Teves told reporters.

Teves compared the BIR's situation with banks trying to dispose of non-performing assets. If some banks could sell their NPAs at a discount just to raise much-needed capital, he said, then it was practical for the BIR to enter into compromise settlements to address the immediate need of shoring up tax collection.

Entering into court battles over tax disputes that have already dragged on for years would be a waste of precious time for the government, he said.

TEVES

BUÑAG

The proposal was raised following the BIR's failure to meet its tax collection target for April. The BIR, the main revenue source of the government, was tasked to collect P78.6 billion during the month but turned in only P71.3 billion, registering a P7.3-billion shortfall.

As of the first quarter, the BIR still had a P3.6-billion collection in excess of its target for the period. The excess, however, was wiped out in April.

The government is hard-pressed to meet its tax collection target to help ensure that its deficit-reduction goal is achieved as scheduled.

The government has set a goal of collecting P675.4 billion in taxes this year to reduce the budget deficit from P146.8 billion last year to only P125 billion.

This year's target is consistent with the program of further reducing the deficit to P63 billion next year and to zero by 2008.

The Philippines, whose credit ratings have been below investment grade for years, hopes to finally get an upgrade on its ratings and lure in more investments by meeting the fiscal targets set by the government.

Credit-rating agencies and investment banks have been religiously following the developments on the country's fiscal climate, and stressed the importance of shoring up revenue collections as a way to improve its credit image.

Meralco eyes lower than cap system loss rate

By Abigail L. Ho

AFTER POSTING ITS LOWEST SYSTEM loss rate in more than 20 years, the Lopez-led Manila Electric Co. said it was aiming at registering a single-digit system loss rate this year and hit the mandated 9.5-percent cap.

Meralco president Jesus Francisco said the company's 2005 system loss rate of 10.58 percent was its lowest since 1982, giving the distribution utility hope that it could soon break into the single-digit level.

"Our target is to reach 9.5 percent as soon as possible. We hope to break into the single-digit level this year," he said.

Power distributors absorb system losses in excess of the mandated 9.5-percent cap as they are not allowed to pass on the additional costs to consumers.

To bring its system losses down, Francisco said Meralco was trying to sign up more industrial customers as higher sales to such customers meant lower average system loss.

Meralco is also improving its overall system to remove technical losses. This was being done by getting rid of system overloads, he said.

Another aspect that Meralco had been working hard to address, he said, was pilferage.

"We've installed elevated meters in depressed areas, which are intended to make pilferage more difficult in areas that we cannot watch on a 24-hour basis," he said.

He said the company had also inked a memorandum of agreement with the Department of Interior and Local Government not only to reduce the incidence of pilferage, but also to promote safety and prevent fires.

The Energy Regulatory Commission is formulating incentives for distribution utilities that will register systems loss rates of below 9.5 percent, as the reduction in the rates would redound to lower electricity rates.

ERC Commissioner Jesus Alcordo earlier said that most distribution utilities were going above the cap, although some were in the 8-9-percent range.

Alcordo said the ERC had yet to come up with concrete incentives for utilities with low system losses, although tax perks could be one of them.

Our national pride: Public education

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

LET US NOT GET SWAMPED BY THE PROBlems that crop up every time a new public school season opens.

Sixty years ago in Davao City, one of my buddies was the district superintendent of schools. At that time, there was already a classroom shortage. I asked him about it. He shrugged and said that, in the end, every kid would have a desk to study on. He was right.

The shortage of classrooms and teachers in our public schools is a perennial problem that is inherent in our vast public educational system.

In school year 2004-2005, the official enrollment in public and private schools reached 13,015,487 in elementary; 6,312,031 in high school, and 2,426,976 in college. The total of 21,754,494 was one-fourth of the citizenry, and was larger than the population of Australia. Our colleges and universities could comfortably accommodate the entire population of Singapore.

In number of schools, there were 41,688 elementary; 9,981 high school, and 1,735 colleges and universities.

In the public schools, there were 337,082 teachers in elementary, and 129,685 in high school. The total of 457,767 is more than the combined number of soldiers, sailors and police.

The system is almost universal. Public elementary and secondary education is tuition-free. No one who wants to enroll is turned away.

If a parent wants a child to get an education, there is always a public school nearby. If the child is bright enough, scholarships are available all the way to a doctorate's degree.

No country in the Third World can come close to our public education infrastructure.

Public education is the government's largest and most widespread enterprise. But such a huge enterprise will always be saddled with equally huge problems.

Although the budget for education has always been larger than that of national defense, there is never enough money. Population continues to expand. Aging facilities have to be replaced and modernized. Textbooks are getting more and more expensive. There simply are not enough libraries. Finally, there is need to prepare our children to compete in the age of information technology.

The most worrisome problem is the deteriorating quality of public education.

High school graduates can hardly communicate in English. This is the result of using Filipino as the medium of instruction in the grade school. English is difficult to master. A student cannot be proficient in English if he starts learning it only in high school.

They also know little of math and physics. But these subjects are no longer emphasized in public schools. These subjects are not meant to turn our students into Einsteins but to train them to think straight.

Let us put back English as the medium of instruction in the grade school. Then, focus again on math and physics in high school. In short, let us return to the old curriculum that served my generation well.

As to the shortage of teachers, I have always felt that retiring a public school teacher at age 60 is a waste of a natural resource. Teachers should be allowed to teach for as long as they want.

Extending the retirement age of teachers from 60 to forever should solve the teacher shortage overnight. If any retired teacher wants to go back to the classroom, he should be allowed to.

Salaries of public school teachers are scandalously low and should be brought up. Better pay means better teachers. Better teachers mean better education. I will feel very uncomfortable if my child were studying under an underpaid teacher.

Sure, there are a lot of problems in our public school system. But, it has developed through the years to slake the Filipino's insatiable thirst for learning.

With all its faults, our public educational system is something every Filipino can be proud of. We should not let it rot.

Stock analysts raise PSEi yearend target

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

ENCOURAGED BY THE EXPANSION OF THE economy, inflation slowdown and robust corporate earnings growth, the Association of Stock Analysts of the Philippines (Asap) has upgraded its yearend target for the benchmark Philippine Stock Exchange index (PSEi).

In a recent briefing, Asap president Francisco Liboro said the PSEi target for this year was raised to 2,820 from the original goal of 2,500.

"We are entering a period of relative inflation stability. There is a strong chance that the stock market will continue to move up and this confirms our contention that we are already in a bull run," Liboro said.

Asap director Astro del Castillo said corporate earnings were expected to grow by 25 to 30 percent in terms of earnings per share, riding on expected economic growth.

Del Castillo, however, said that what might be worrisome for stock market investors were possible delays in the state's efforts to privatize power assets and the increasing oil prices.

"The high cost of power is one of the factors that is slowing the growth of the economy," Del Castillo explains.

Stock prices, as tracked by the PSEi, rose 9.5 percent to 2,296.11 points in the first five months of the year, from 2,096.04 last year.

This growth was supported by the 8.6-percent increase in the value turnover in the first five months of the year to P213.45 billion, from P196.47 billion in the same period last year.

Total market capitalization or the value of total stocks traded in the bourse climbed 14.2 percent to P6.8 trillion from P5.95 trillion last year.

The bulk of the market capitalization remained concentrated on the financial sector. Based on a PSE review, the market capitalization of this sector increased by 13.3 percent to P4.8 trillion during the first five months of the year.

The services sector followed with a P643.3-billion market capital, or 17.1 percent higher than its level a year ago.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of June 9, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
FINANCIAL BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	10,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	34	35.5	33	33	355,400
Bank of the Phil. Islands	50.5	51.5	49	49.5	1,167,900
Citystate Savings Bank	20.25	20.25	20.25	20.25	300
Export and Ind. Bank A	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	1,430,000
Equitable Pci Bank Inc.	72	73.5	72	73	157,800
International Exch. Bank	41.5	41.5	41	41	23,600
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	32.5	33.5	32.5	33	442,300
Philippine National Bank	33	33	32	32	37,800
Phil. Savings Bank	39.5	39.5	39	39.5	11,900
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	18	18.25	17.75	18	81,100
Security Bank Corp.	50	50	49	49	1,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	44	44	44	44	2,000
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Filipino Fund Inc.	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	21,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	27	32	27	32	12,200
Manulife Financial Corp.	1750	1750	1720	1720	580
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	210	210	210	210	11,090
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2080	2100	2080	2100	1,500
Ivantage Corp.	1.16	1.2	1.16	1.18	1,180,000
INDUSTRIAL					
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	43	43	42	42	726,700
Manila Electric Co. A	13.75	13.75	13.75	13.75	14,800
Manila Electric Co. B	21.5	21.75	21.5	21.5	538,400
Manila Water Co. Inc.	7.1	7.3	7.1	7.2	3,217,000
Petron Corp.	3.8	3.9	3.8	3.9	4,069,000
Salcon Power Corp.	1.92	1.98	1.92	1.98	81,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.91	0.91	0.91	0.91	10,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	23	23.25	23	23.25	45,500
Jollibee Foods Corp.	33	34.5	33	34.5	510,500
Roxas Holdings Inc.	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.65	2,047,000
San Miguel Corp. A	63	63.5	63	63.5	75,300
San Miguel Corp. B	69.5	70	69.5	70	108,800
Universal Robina Corp.	19.25	19.5	19.25	19.5	157,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.215	0.215	0.215	0.215	200,000
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	0.29	0.3	0.29	0.29	610,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	1.18	1.18	1.16	1.16	1,637,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	4.55	4.6	4.55	4.6	6,550,000
Republic Cement Corp.	1.26	1.26	1.26	1.26	50,000
CHEMICALS					
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.51	0.51	0.51	0.51	30,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Global Equities Inc.	0.075	0.075	0.0725	0.0725	10,900,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	355	365	352.5	352.5	208,690
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.47	0.47	0.47	0.47	250,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	5.2	5.2	5.1	5.1	255,000
Ajo Net Holdings Inc.	0.024	0.024	0.023	0.023	1,100,000
A. Soriano Corp.	3.6	3.7	3.6	3.6	1,243,000
APC Group Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	100,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	4,000,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	1.46	1.46	1.44	1.44	55,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	100,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	10	10	10	10	17,600
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1	1.02	1	1	11,570,000
Dmci Holdings Inc.	3.65	3.75	3.6	3.6	1,239,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	3.1	3.1	3.05	3.1	1,225,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.3	125,000
Pacifica	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	4,000,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	710,000
SM Investments Corp.	219	223	217	218	101,190
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	200,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	12.25	12.25	11.5	11.75	8,651,400
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42	30,000
Belle Corp.	1.04	1.06	1.02	1.04	1,584,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	4,500,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	1.92	1.92	1.92	1.92	10,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.58	0.6	0.58	0.6	12,260,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.03	0.03	0.028	0.028	1,700,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.32	1.38	1.32	1.38	8,009,000
Interport Res. B	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	1,000,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.205	0.205	0.205	0.205	30,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	2,300,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.48	1.52	1.46	1.5	17,606,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.21	0.21	0.2	0.2	8,510,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	600,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	11	11	10.75	10.75	479,700
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	1,620,000
SM Development Corp.	1.56	1.56	1.54	1.54	53,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.6	7.6	7.3	7.4	12,148,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.07	0.07	0.065	0.07	600,000
SERVICE					
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	14.25	14.5	14	14.25	29,100
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.18	1.2	1.16	1.2	1,789,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	840	860	840	855	14,830
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.45	3.5	3.35	3.4	3,411,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1920	1940	1915	1915	81,510
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.165	0.165	0.165	0.165	750,000
Ionics Inc.	2.5	2.5	2.42	2.42	396,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	100,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.048	0.049	0.048	0.049	1,100,000
Philweb Corp.	0.03	0.03	0.029	0.03	41,500,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	2.7	2.75	2.7	2.7	1,155,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	13.75	13.75	13.5	13.5	1,773,600
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.4	1.4	1.36	1.4	506,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.62	0.65	0.62	0.62	520,000
EDUCATION					
Far Eastern University	1000	1000	1000	1000	890
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Macroasia Corp.	1.9	2	1.9	1.94	485,000
Paxys Inc.	11.25	11.25	10.25	10.5	1,260,300
Philippine Seven Corp.	1.82	3.25	1.82	3.25	6,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0075	0.008	0.0075	0.008	63,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	6.2	6.4	6.2	6.3	540,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	2,300,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.3	0.32	0.3	0.3	14,750,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.022	0.022	0.022	0.022	7,800,000
Omico Corp.	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	108,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	3	3.15	2.9	3.05	8,431,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	2.95	3.1	2.9	3.05	17,787,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	27	27	27	27	49,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	630,000
OIL					
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	2,200,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.009	89,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	10,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	455,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	60,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	14	15.5	14	15	753,600
PREFERRED					
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
WARRANTS, PHIL. DEPOSIT RECEIPTS, ETC.					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5	6,000

CURRENCIES

June 11, 2006 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.790264	1.000000	53.0340
Japan	Yen	0.006925	0.008763	0.4647
United Kingdom	Pound	1.456456	1.843000	97.7417
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.101816	0.128838	6.8328
Switzerland	Franc	0.641396	0.811622	43.0436
Canada	Dollar	0.704272	0.891186	47.2632
Singapore	Dollar	0.495556	0.627077	33.2564
Australia	Dollar	0.587338	0.743218	39.4158
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.096302	2.652661	140.6812
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.210714	0.266638	14.1409
Brunei	Dollar	0.494007	0.625117	33.1525
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000084	0.000106	0.0056
Thailand	Baht	0.020563	0.026021	1.3800
UAE	Dirham	0.215266	0.272398	14.4464
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.265400	67.1092
ArgentinaPeso		0.324359	17.2021	
Brazil	Real	0.256329	0.348595	0.441112	23.3939
Denmark	Kroner	0.134079	0.169664	8.9980
India	Rupee	0.017244	0.021820	1.1572
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.215624	0.272851	14.4704
Mexico	New Peso	0.069376	0.087789	4.6558
New Zealand	Dollar	0.494874	0.626213	33.2106
Norway	Kroner	0.127573	0.161431	8.5613
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013153	0.016644	0.8827
South Africa	Rand	0.116592	0.147536	7.8244
Korea	Won	0.000829	0.001049	0.0556
Sweden	Kroner	0.108295	0.137037	7.2676
Syria	Pound	0.015224	0.019264	1.0216
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024340	0.030800	1.6334

Microsoft helps . . .

From page B3

at Microsoft Philippines.

One of the key elements of the MIT Network is the Cardinal Plus, based on smart card technology, which MIT was the first to implement in the country. Smart cards allow self-service transactions and are used as a "key" to attendance, library and other school records, making sure they are always updated and accessible for viewing and use in reports. Enrollment has also become easy and quick, allowing students to sign up for classes from anywhere online. Matriculation charges can be paid through its website using Bancnet-accredited ATM cards, at any of its campuses.

Stocks seen . . .

From page B1

sible effect on local rates," said Fitzgerald Aclan, head of research and strategy at BDO Trust.

But the sharp decline could provide a window for bargain-hunters, according to Paul Joseph Garcia, ING chief investment officer.

"Investors were spooked by further hikes in US interest rates and a possible slowdown in global economic growth but we believe the market decline is overdone and thus it would provide a buying opportunity for investors," Garcia said. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

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Text us your feedback: inquirer it name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Call center labor shortage bearing down on RP

THE SUCCESS of call centers in the Philippines is causing a manpower shortage in the industry.

By Alexander Villafania
Contributor

AS THE CALL CENTER INDUSTRY IN the Philippines continues on its blindingly fast progress, it still has to contend with the issue of labor shortage. Unfortunately, the industry fears that labor shortage might get worse in the coming years.

In a recent presentation, the call center organization Contact Center Association of the Philippines (CCAP) warned that the labor shortage has actually worsened in recent times. From a five-percent hiring rate, call center operators are reporting three-percent hiring rates for applicants.

Worst still is the attrition rate, or the number of call center agents who are leaving their companies. Currently, the attrition rate is at 35 percent, well above the 8.3-percent attrition rate the industry has set as acceptable.

CCAP reported that of the 400,000 Filipino college graduates per year, only 100,000 are immediately employable. Of this 100,000 only 12,000 could pass requirements to work as contact center agents. This is still well below the 60,000 minimum needed by the call center industry.

And while analysts forecast that the number of outsource services agents (combined figures for contact center and business process outsourcing providers) could reach over 500,000 in the next four years, the industry is not putting too much hope in achieving this number.

CCAP director Benedict Hernandez said the current shortage could be attributed to the current quality of education which college graduates receive. This includes lack of proper English communications skills necessary for this type of employment.

Hernandez said the industry took notice of the labor shortage problem before but because of the double-digit growth rate of the call center industry, human resource is having difficulty keeping up.

"Thus, we at the organization is in active talks with the government, the academic institutions and even among our members so that we could come up with activities to produce graduates that are ready for the job at hand," Hernandez said.

Hernandez said their activities include working with the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority to develop a courseware suited to call center work. Some members of CCAP have also partnered directly with schools for teacher training and passing on the training to students, thus ensuring an immediate pool of workers for the company.

But Hernandez said the contact center industry is still assured of a steady labor pool in the coming years, assuming that the industry's current activities to address the problem are successful.

"Our activities now, if we don't make enhancements, could produce up to 200,000 employees. A little bit of improvement in these programs could rack up about 300,000 people for the industry. But when do we see that the supply of workers matches the demand? It's anyone's guess," Hernandez said.

AMA offers 50% discount to victims of pre-need educational plan collapse

By Alexander Villafania
Contributor

IT LEARNING INSTITUTION AMA EDUCation System (AMAES) is offering a 50-percent discount on matriculation to pre-need plan holders whose accounts were closed when their pre-need providers went bankrupt.

AMAES has signed a memorandum of agreement with Parents Enabling Parents (PEP) Coalition, an organization composed of plan holders seeking to get back their investments in the pre-need companies that have closed, such as Pacific Plans and College Assurance Plans.

The discount is available to over 200 AMAES branches nationwide, including its subsidiaries such as AMA Computer Learning Center, ABE International Business College, Norwegian Maritime Academy and St. Augustine School of Nursing.

The discount could be applied to all AMA courses, from two-year to full four-year courses.

Recipients of the discounts have to pass an entrance exam required for all students of the school and must maintain a passing grade. Their discounts would be spread out in the duration of the course they choose.

AMAES Senior Vice President for Operations Patrick Azanza said the discount is available to all victims of the disastrous bankruptcy of pre-need companies and not just to members of PEP.

However, he said PEP would serve as endorser to applicants for the 50-percent discount.

"For this school year, we're opening up 5,000 slots for this program. We've also allocated P150,000 per student, which amounts to P750 million," Azanza said.

Azanza noted that AMAES is willing to increase the number of slots to 10,000 in the next school year depending on the need and availability of funds.

"We'll look for sourcing of funds if we are to increase the slots. We may get this from our international branches," Azanza said.

Meanwhile, PEP president Philip Piccio said they are in the process of looking for potential recipients of the AMAES discount.

Applicants could be members or non-members of PEP but they should present documents validating that they were victims of the pre-need company closure.

Piccio said PEP has about 10,000 plan holder members from different pre-need companies not just CAP and Pacific Plans but also from the Professional Group and Capitol.

"There are over a million children affected by the closures of their pre-need plans," Piccio said.

Piccio is also urging other learning institutions to also provide assistance to victims of the pre-need company closures.

"These parents worked hard to give their children good education and it all disappeared. Now, I'm calling other schools to lend some help to these parents."

FLIPTUNES hopes to capture the magic Apple Computer did for iTunes

Downloads offered as legal alternative to music distribution

By Alexander Villafania
Contributor

A LOCALLY CREATED ONLINE music store is tapping the Filipino audiophile crowd to promote Filipino musical talents but legitimizes its operations by providing payment for downloaded music.

Fliptunes (www.fliptunes.net), developed by Internet service provider Mosaic Communications, works similarly to Apple's iTunes download software but does not need to have a download client installed in a PC.

A subscriber has to register to the website and open a PayEasy online payment account. There is no need to install a download client since Fliptunes already has its own online download interface.

The site, which started a little over a month ago, features mostly local recording artists and their works, which could be downloaded either per song or as a whole album.

There are also music videos and podcasts that could be downloaded to Apple's popular iPod digital music player.

So far, Fliptunes already has 22 recording artists, 20 albums with about 1,000 songs and about one dozen videos. The site plans to feature songs exclusively available only in their website.

Each song costs P40 per download while videos cost P80.

The site also boasts of Microsoft Windows Media Digital Rights Management program to prevent redistribution of songs that are downloaded from their site.

In an e-mailed response to Infotech, Fliptunes President Robertson Chiang said the company is currently building its audio library and is in negotiations with several record companies for distribution of original songs.

Chiang noted that their intention is to provide a legitimate alternative to downloaded music, especially in a country where most songs installed in personal music players are copied from other sources.

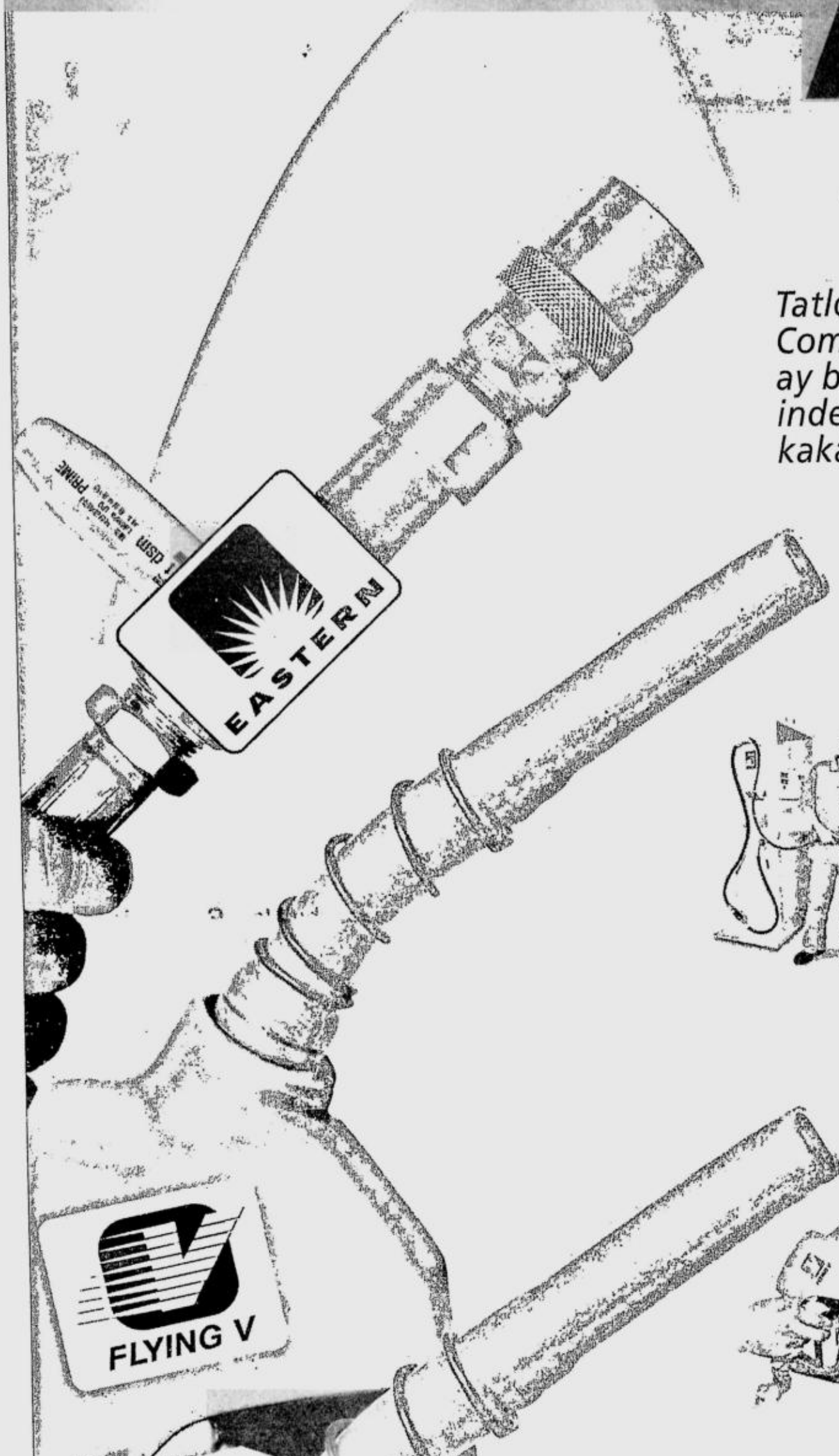
"Without a legitimate alternative, there was really no other way to get digital downloads. Hopefully, through education, this crowd will slowly shift to legitimate options," Chiang said.

SUG

KARGA

Narito ang kalayaan na
lakas at husay para pa

Tatlong kababayan at makabayang independer
Companies, ang EASTERN PETROLEUM, FLYING
ay buong giting at taas-noong nagdedeklara ng
independence from 100% fossil fuels–kaya nari
kakayahang tumayo ng sarili para sa ikabubuti



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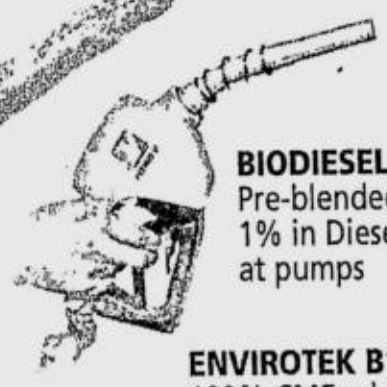

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US official says upcoming trade talks deadlines critical

WASHINGTON—NEW US TRADE Representative Susan Schwab last week said that it is crucial for negotiators to wrap up the key elements of a global trade agreement by the end of July, but she did not reveal how she planned to overcome major obstacles with Europe and developing nations.

Schwab, who won Senate confirmation to succeed Rob Portman as the top US trade negotiator last Thursday, said the administration had no interest in pursuing anything less than a significant reduction in trade barriers on farm products, manufactured goods and service industries such as banking.

"The United States is determined to seek a robust outcome," she said. "We are not willing to settle for something less than an ambitious outcome."

The United States is among 149 nations who are trying to conclude a global round of trade talks known as the Doha Round.

The negotiations have missed a number of deadlines so far because of an inability to reach a deal on cutting farm barriers in Europe, the United States and other rich nations, and a refusal of major developing countries such as India and Brazil to agree to significant tariff reductions in the areas of manufactured goods and services.

Schwab said she would travel to Geneva at the end of June for another round of negotiations with the goal of wrapping up the major outlines of a deal by the end of July.

She said the timing was crucial because, without significant progress in coming weeks, a completed deal probably cannot be achieved by the end of this year.

She said the agreement needed to be done by late December in order to make sure it can be sent to the US Congress under expedited procedures that are set to expire on July 1, 2007.

"If we are not done with all the critical elements by the end of July, it will be very hard to meet that schedule," she said.

Schwab, who had been a deputy trade representative since November, is Bush's third top trade negotiator.

She succeeds Portman, who was picked by Bush this spring to become White House budget director as part of a White House shake-up to bolster the president's sagging approval ratings. *AP*

China plans to unite forex trade systems

BEIJING—THE CENTRAL BANK is planning on combining China's traditional foreign exchange trading system with a new system initiated last year by the end of 2006, the official China Securities Journal said on Saturday.

An integrated system would be the latest in a series of reforms to increase market efficiency and monitoring, the newspaper said.

The new system was launched a year ago and allows domestic trading in eight foreign currency pairs, a step towards a market-based environment by allowing homegrown lenders to trade foreign currencies, but is separate from yuan trading.

The country's decade-old interbank market, the China Foreign Exchange Trade System (CFETS), currently trades just four currency pairs—the yuan against the euro, yen, Hong Kong dollar and US dollar.

A merging of the two systems would also allow trading in swaps and futures as well as spot trading of the yuan against other currencies, said the journal.

China is speeding up capital market reforms to prepare firms and banks for increased risks after revaluing the yuan by 2.1 percent to the dollar and abandoning an 11-year-old dollar peg for a managed float linked to a basket of currencies last July.

It launched onshore foreign exchange forwards in the yuan a month later, and also kicked off over-the-counter trading for the yuan and started a market-making system in January.

The central bank of China also published rules in February, permitting interest rate swaps for the first time.

Last Friday, the yuan traded at 8.015:$1. *Reuters*

G-8 finance chiefs warn of soaring oil rates

ST. PETERSBURG, RUSSIA—FInance ministers from the Group of Eight leading industrialized nations said in a draft communique Saturday that global economic growth is strong, but warned of dangers posed by high energy prices and global imbalances.

"Global growth remains strong and is gradually becoming more broadly based," said the ministers, who met in St. Petersburg in the run-up to next month's summit of the G-8 leaders. "However, downside risks from high and volatile energy prices and widening global imbalances remain."

The ministers called for promoting greater transparency and reliability in energy market data through developing a global common standard for reporting oil reserves.

Finance ministers had been expected to discuss how the United States is dealing with its huge trade deficit and what policies other countries are pursuing to bolster domestic growth as a way of supporting US exports. Without referring directly to the United States, the draft called the task of addressing economic imbalances a "shared responsibility."

The US Commerce Department last Friday said that the trade deficit rose to $63.4 billion in April, after two months of rare declines, pushed higher by surging oil prices and a flood of imported furniture, televisions and toys from China.

In the face of calls in Europe to diversify energy supplies away from a strong reliance on Russia, which currently supplies a quarter of European energy, Russia has insisted that predictable markets for its oil and gas are a key part of energy security. The draft appeared to acknowledge both positions.

"We recognize the importance of ... diversification of energy markets and supply sources and of strengthened emergency response cooperation in ensuring energy security," the draft said.

The ministers also drafted a separate statement focusing on the need to support impoverished nations' access to energy supplies.

"We urge national governments and multilateral and bilateral donors to integrate energy issues into poverty reduction and country assistance strategies, including options for the least developed countries to tap their natural resources potential," they said.

The document saluted the role played by emerging economies like Russia, China and Brazil in funding development projects in the world's poorest nations.

Russia, which is leading the G-8 for the first time, is keen to flex financial muscles that have been buffed by billions of dollars in oil money flowing into its coffers at a time of record world prices. It is the world's second largest oil exporter after Saudi Arabia. *AP*

BREATHTAKING
A female visitor views models of high-rise apartment buildings during the opening of a real estate exposition in Suzhou, east China. Middle and small sized apartments with low prices are popular among visitors, China's Xinhua news agency said. Weeks ago, China's Cabinet took aggressive steps to cool off one of the hottest parts in the country's red-hot economy, ordering measures to restrain soaring housing prices and discourage real estate speculation. AP

US court orders Varig to return jets to Boeing

LOS ANGELES—A NEW YORK State Supreme Court on Friday ordered troubled Brazilian airline Varig to turn over a number of aircraft to various plaintiffs including Boeing Co.

An injunction called for Varig, which declared bankruptcy a year ago, to stop operating the aircraft on June 12 and to return them to the plaintiffs by June 16. The injunction also called for Varig's non-operating aircraft to be returned to owners by July 1.

A Boeing spokesperson said late Friday that it had 10 airplanes at the airline, but the court order listed seven planes. Earlier, Brazilian news reports put the airplane total at seven.

Founded in 1927, Varig—short for Viacao Aerea Rio-Grandense—has long been one of Brazil's best-known companies globally. But it has been struggling for years, racking up debt and losing market share to more cost-efficient rivals like TAM and Gol.

On Thursday an employee group, known by its Portuguese acronym TGV, was the lone bidder at a public auction, offering $449 million for Varig. But the bid was well below the minimum price of $860 million stipulated by the court overseeing the auction, raising doubts about whether it would be approved.

Brazilian Judge Luiz Roberto Ayoub had said he would decide on Friday whether to authorize the sale of Varig, which has been operating under bankruptcy protection for the last year.

But he decided to postpone the ruling until today after receiving a new bid from a little known investment fund called the Multilong Corp., which offered $800 million for the troubled carrier. A company official could not immediately be reached for comment. *Reuters*

World Cup seen to slow down Latin America market trade

NEW YORK—LATIN AMERICA'S fixation with World Cup football over the next month is likely to hit volumes in regional financial markets, but opinions differ on whether it will cool the volatility that has rocked emerging markets.

With Brazil markets closing early on game days, Argentina's stock market bringing in a giant TV screen for matches, and traders betting electronically in Mexico, investors' attention could drift unless global markets tremble, analysts said.

"Basically we see lower volumes on game days, especially when a country's (team) is playing but also throughout the tournament," said Clyde Wardle, HSBC emerging markets analyst.

"It's likely to translate into lower volatility but we could see some quiet spikes, that is, you could see large movement but without a large amount of market noise."

Of the 32 teams in the month-long tournament that opened last Friday in Germany, six are from Latin America.

These include Brazil, Mexico and Argentina—the region's biggest economies—which have seen wide swings in the prices of their stocks, bonds and currencies in the past month.

The Brazilian real, the regional bellwether currency, in the past month staged its biggest one-day gain and biggest one-day fall in four years, each more than 4 percent moves, as emerging markets globally were roiled by rising interest rates in the United States, Europe and Asia.

The question is whether the distraction of the World Cup will calm the financial turbulence.

Brazil appears to be the only country which closes its markets early for World Cup games on trading days.

Lehman Brothers emerging markets analyst John Welch, who worked in Brazil, said trading volumes would definitely fall.

Brazil has won the Cup five times, more than any other country, and is the only country to have qualified for all 17 World Cup tournaments.

Two-time champion Argentina also has matches during trading sessions.

The World Bank, in a special World Cup feature posted with a link on its website, said: "Studies suggest that success or failure in football (or soccer) may affect a country's economy."

One of the site's papers explores how World Cup match outcomes plays on investor mood and stock market performance.

Argentina's stock market could surely benefit from a boost in positive investor sentiment. Its Merval benchmark stock market index lost more than 20 percent since April 26.

"I have no doubts at all that trading volume will dry out when Brazil and Argentina play, but I don't think this is likely to impact the market trend," said emerging market analyst Ricardo Amorim of West LB.

Stock markets globally were shaken in recent weeks by concerns that US interest rates could rise further than previously expected, which would make riskier emerging market investments relatively less attractive.

The World Cup could make buyers for bonds scarce in Latin America, notes IDEAglobal's emerging markets analyst Enrique Alvarez. *Reuters*

Nervous US markets await key inflation data after rough week

NEW YORK—AFTER WALL Street suffered its worst week so far this year, interest rate worries continue to haunt investors.

The market's nervousness will likely extend this week, with the disclosure of economic numbers critical to the Federal Reserve's next move on interest rates. As in the past, data that is too hot or too cold could give stocks a sharp move in either direction.

Last week, the Dow Jones industrials shed 356 points, the Nasdaq composite index widened its loss for 2006 and the Standard & Poor's 500 index now lingers just above the flatline.

Ever since late last year, investors have been watching inflation data for signals that the Fed has hiked rates enough to contain price increases. Over the past two years, the central bank has nudged the nation's key short-term lending rate 16 consecutive times to a current level of 5 percent.

But while the economy has shown evidence of cooling off, oil prices still stand above $70 a barrel and are considered a potential inflation threat—which raises the possibility that interest rates could keep climbing and put a serious dent in economic growth.

Fed Chair Ben Bernanke all but guaranteed another rate hike at the June 28-29 policy meeting when he said last week that core inflation—without energy or food prices—is nearing the limits of the central bank's tolerance. Bernanke appeared willing to stunt economic growth and raise rates as much as necessary in order to stem inflation.

For this reason, this week's data on wholesale and consumer prices will be particularly important for Wall Street's outlook on the economy. Coupled with the potential for an economic crash, the uncertainty has investors' backs against the wall.

Last week, the Dow tumbled 3.16 percent, the S&P 500 dropped 2.79 percent and the Nasdaq plunged 3.8 percent.

The Labor Department tomorrow will release the May reading of its closely watched producer price index, which measures price changes for goods at the wholesale level. Overall PPI is projected to grow 0.5 percent after surging 0.9 percent in April; core PPI—excluding volatile food and energy—is seen rising 0.2 percent.

On Wednesday, the department follows up with its consumer price index. CPI is expected to increase 0.4 percent after a 0.6-percent rise last month. Analysts are predicting a more modest 0.2 percent growth in core CPI following a 0.3-percent jump in April.

On Thursday, the Commerce Department posts industrial activity for May. Growth in output is forecast to slow to 0.2 percent from 0.8 percent in April; capacity utilization is seen staying flat at 82 percent.

Friday's consumer-sentiment index from the University of Michigan will be monitored for evidence of deteriorating consumer strength. The index's preliminary reading for June is expected to tick 0.1 point lower to 79.

Investors will also be anticipating the government's weekly update on domestic oil and gasoline reserves Wednesday and the Labor Department's report on first-time unemployment claims, out Thursday. *AP*

Japan to give China, Asia coal technology

TOKYO—JAPAN IS SET TO provide China with technology that uses liquefaction of coal to produce fuel such as gasoline, an attempt to relieve rising world energy demand, the Nihon Keizai Shimbun (Nikkei) said on Saturday.

The growth of emerging economies such as China has made the demand for energy an increasingly pressing issue in Asia, with one of many disputes between Japan and its giant Asian neighbor centering on development of gas fields in the East China Sea.

The new technology produces petroleum fuels such as gasoline and kerosene by subjecting powdered coal to heat and pressure, the Nikkei said.

An independent agency under Japan's trade ministry, the New Energy and Industrial Technology Development Organization (Nedo), will join two Chinese energy firms as early as next month to test the new technology, aiming to commercialize it by 2010.

If all goes well, the Chinese firms by that year will have set up a plant able to process 3,000 tons a day at a cost of 100 billion yen ($878.1 million), with Nedo receiving fees for the use of the technology.

Japan has been working to develop coal liquefaction technology since the 1980s, but its relatively high cost kept it from being a practical option until recently, when world oil prices shot up, the Nikkei said.

The Nikkei said that Japan was also in negotiations for similar cooperation with Indonesia and was considering doing so with India, Mongolia and the Philippines.

Japanese and Chinese officials last month agreed to launch a policy dialogue aimed at threshing out specific projects and goals on energy cooperation in the hopes that it would help improve strained bilateral ties.

The two nations disagree over the position of the border between their exclusive economic zones in the East China Sea. Japan fears that China's exploitation of the area could tap into resources in its own zone. *Reuters*

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Area	Venue	Testing Schedule 9am- 5pm
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Other Regions	TESDA Regional and Provincial Offices	June19-23, 2006

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2. Iloilo City - John B. Lacson ITCenter, Molo, Iloilo City Tel. No. (033) 336-10-82	July 10 - August 10, 2006
3. Iloilo City – Saint Zita Development Center, Ledesma cor. Jalandoni, Davao City Tel. No. (033) 337-21-10	July 10 - August 10, 2006
4. Davao City – TESDA Regional Office No. XI, Anda St., Davao City, Tel. No.(082)221-8778	July 10 - August 10, 2006

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"Four wheel all terrain or sport utility type 4x4 Pick-up double cab vehicle with heavy duty chassis and body. Engine with displacement of 2800 cc. but not exceeding 3500 cc, Turbo intercooled diesel, 5 speed M/T, Power Steering, Alloy magwheels (5 pcs.), spare tire with cable lock, Brakes front ventilated disc and rear drum, ABS with EBD, All Power features (doors/windows), Standard interior/ exterior features equipped., Safety features with airbag, Multi-directional Fog lamps and Security features equipped with remote keyless entry with alarm, Side step board, Seatbelt (front/rear), Headrest (front/rear), Airconditioning System with multiple vents, standard tools, AM/FM stereo cassette with CD player, Tint (one-way), Warranty (1 year). Free LTO registration, sunshield matting, EWD, seat cover."	6	P 7,980,000.00	P 5,000.00

* Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid Opening

Expected Date of Delivery: August 2006
Schedule of Activities:

Particulars	Date	Venue
Pre-Bidding Conference	June 21, 2006 (Wednesday) at 10:00 a.m.	6th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City
Submission of Eligibility Requirement Documents, Technical and Financial Proposals	"On or before" 9:00 a.m. of July 5, 2006 (Wednesday)	BAC Secretariat, 6th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City
Opening of Eligibility Requirement Documents, Technical and Financial Proposals (Prospective Bidders are encouraged to attend this activity)	July 5, 2006 (Wednesday) at 10:30 a.m.	6th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the IRR-A of R.A. 9184, and is restricted to Filipino citizens or organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest belonging to citizens of the Philippines and **must be authorized car dealer**. Only Bids from Bidders who passed the eligibility check will be opened. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall undergo the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during post-qualification procedure.

Interested parties may download these forms at www.devbankphil.com.ph and at the Electronic Procurement Service of the Department of Budget and Management. Prospective bidders may secure the bid documents and Eligibility Requirement Forms from the BAC Secretariat, 6th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City, upon payment of a **non-refundable fee of Php 5,000.00.**

The Bank reserves the right to reject any and all bids, annul the bidding process, or not award the contract at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

For further inquiries, please call telephone numbers 8125702/8189511 loc. 2610.

Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – June 5 & 12, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
NEGROS STATE COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE
Kabankalan City, Negros Occidental
Cell Phone Nos. 09206238718/09173015565
Fax No. c/o OfficeCom-Kabankalan. (034) 471-3425

THE SEARCH COMMITTEE FOR THE NEGROS STATE COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE (NSCA) PRESIDENCY

Announces the opening of the

SEARCH FOR NSCA PRESIDENCY

Minimum Qualifications:

1. A holder of a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)/Doctor of Education (Ed.D) or any earned doctoral degree in related academic fields;
2. Must have five years relevant managerial and administrative experience;
3. Must be a natural born Filipino citizen with proven integrity and not convicted with any administrative and/or criminal cases; and
4. Preferably not more than sixty (60) years old:

Applicants are requested to submit the following requirements:

5. Letter of Application;
6. Comprehensive Resumé supported with authenticated documents;
7. Vision and Mission for the Negros State College of Agriculture;
8. Birth Certificate, NBI, Ombudsman and Police Clearances, and disclosure of Assets and Liabilities and current and pending administrative/criminal case/s;
9. Service Records
10. Physical, psycho neuro and drug test

In addition, applicants are requested to submit five (5) sets of formal applications and certified support documents not later than **July 15, 2006** to

Dr. Wenceslao O. Sison, Jr.
c/o DR. MILAGROS M. ROMERO
Member, NSCA Search Committee for Presidency
CHED Regional Office VI
 # 12 New Washington Street, Jaro, Iloilo City
Tel. No. (033) 3206976

and for queries, please contact the Secretariat, through the Board Secretary, Nelly Navales-Cabual, Negros State College of Agriculture, Kabankalan City, Negros Occidental with contact Numbers 09173015561 or 09206238718.

(PDI – June 12, 19 & 26, 2006)

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OBITUARIES

"We seem to give her back to Thee, O God.
Who gavest her to us. Yet as Thou didst not lose her in giving.
so we do not lose her by her return."

Our dearly beloved

Conchita Martinez Padilla

June 23, 1918

Peacefully joined the Lord
and her husband, Pablo A. Padilla, Sr.
on June 11, 2006

Her loving children: Carolina and Tito Roy, Teresita,
Pablo Jr. and Maria Luisa Pronstroller, and Angel Ernesto,
grandchildren: Karen and Robson, Juan Paolo,
Rhea and Allan, Rachel and Ronald, Louella, Susan Melissa and Pablo Marito IV,
and great grandchildren: Lorenzo, Francesca and Anna Karina,
request relatives and friends to offer prayers
to celebrate the beginning of her life everlasting.

The family members would like to invite relatives and friends to pay their last respects to their beloved mother and grandmother at the Sanctuario Sto. Niño Chapel, Kapitan Pepe Subdivision, Cabanatuan City, starting Tuesday, June 13, 2006.

Her final journey to the Lord will take place on Thursday, June 15, 2006 after the 8 AM Holy Mass.

"... And life is eternal and love is immortal, and death is only a horizon, and a horizon is nothing but the limit of our sight..."

Rodo Jarrett, O.P.

In lieu of flowers, your offerings to the Carmel of Our Lady of Nazareth or Cathedral Construction Project, Cabanatuan City, would be much appreciated.

Cardinal Sanchez celebrates 38th Episcopal Ordination

ON JUNE 13, 2006, HIS EMINENCE, JOSE T. CARdinal Sanchez, will celebrate his 60th Sacerdotal, 38th Episcopal Ordination and 15th Elevation to the College of Cardinals, in a simple Celebration of the Holy Eucharist to be held at the Dominican Daughters of the Immaculate Mother (DDIM) Church at 872 St. Joseph St., Commonwealth Ave., Quezon City.

Cardinal Sanchez is the Prefect Emeritus of the Congregation for the Clergy. Born in March 17, 1920 of Pandan Catanduanes, His Eminence was ordained Priest in 1946, and became Auxiliary Bishop of Caceres in 1968. In 1972, he became Bishop of Lucena and later in 1982, the Metropolitan Archbishop of Nueva Segovia. In 1985, he was appointed Secretary of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples.

In 1991, Cardinal Sanchez was elevated to the Sacred College of Cardinals. On the same year, he was appointed Prefect of the Congregation for the Clergy.

Cardinal Sanchez is the spiritual leader and adviser of the Peñafrancia Devotees Association, Inc. of Metro Manila, which is headed by Dr. Rosario Prieto-Felipe. The Peñafrancia Devotees Association conducts free medical and dental missions every month in depressed areas, where medical and dental services, medicines, and even vitamins are given free to indigents, in the name of our Beloved "INA", Our Miraculous Virgin of Peñafrancia.

His Eminence, Jose T. Cardinal Sanchez, is based in the Vatican City. He remains to be the most respected representative and patriarch of the Filipino Catholic Community in the Vatican. He is always ready to assist, counsel, and represent Filipinos in Rome or Europe in their spiritual needs.

Congratulations, His Eminence, Jose T. Cardinal Sanchez!

We wish you continued blessings of good health and Divine Guidance in your leadership as the Pastor and Religious Envoy of the Filipino in the Vatican. Mabuhay po kayo, Eminence!

UP professor received international award abroad

DR. VIRGEL C. BINGHAY, ASSOCIATE PROFESsor and Chair of the Graduate Studies Program of the U.P. SOLAIR received the prestigious "HR Leadership Award" during the "Global HR Excellence Awards" rites held at the Taj Lands End in Mumbai, India last Feb. 3. Binghay was chosen for "his leadership and well-known contribution in the field of HR such that his position in the HR fraternity is strategic and iconic. As thinker and doer, he is a believer and role model and believer of change." The awards rites was part of the "2006 World HRD Congress" last Feb. 2 to 4, where Binghay was also an invited speaker. He spoke about "Aligning Culture to Corporate Goals" to more than 900 professionals in attendance from 31 countries across the globe.

The World HRD Congress was a rendezvous of HR professionals behind some of the world's most successful and sought-out corporations, with the objective of providing a platform for networking and sharing the best practices for organizational transformation and development. As such the World HRD Congress had the following specific objectives: (1) to provoke thinking, encourage interaction and provide direction to the HR community and CEOs and those who manage corporations; (2) to provide a balance mix of specific HR knowledge, sharing best practices and next generation ideas in HR; (3) to prepare and re-position organizations to the 21st century requirement, thinking and working culture; and (4) to realize the scope of changes in skill-sets and gear up to meet the challenges of the future.

More Classified Ads on Page A8 : Philhealth, Department of the Interior and Local Government, City Government of General Santos City, City Government of Zamboanga, Zamboanga City Water District, and Davao Prison & Penal Farm's Invitation to Bid.

Bukas na liham para kay Pangulong Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, Environment Secretary Angelo Reyes at sa Sambayanang Pilipino

Isang-daan at walong taon na ang nakararaan nang makamit natin ang ating kalayaan mula sa mga mapanupil na Kastila. Noong Hunyo 12, 1898 sa Kawit, Cavite muli nating nasilayan ang pagwagayway ng watawat ng Pilipinas na sumasalamin sa katapangan at katapatan ng ating mga bayani.

Naging bahagi ng kasaysayan na ito ang Biak-na-Bato, San Miguel, na tinatawag ngayong Biak-na-Bato National Park, sapagkat naging ligtas na kublihan at kuta ito ni Heneral Emilio Aguinaldo at ng magigiting na rebolusyonaryo sa panahon ng kanilang pakikidigma upang makamit ang minimithing kalayaan.

Mapalad tayong mga Pilipino, lalo't higit kaming mga Bulakenyo sapagkat iniwan at ipinamana sa atin ng magigiting na bayani ng himagsikan ang isang kasaysayan na kailanman ay nakatatak na sa ating pagkatao. Tatak ito ng kagitingan na kailanman ay hindi natin hahayaang masayang at yurakan.

Ngayon, dala naming mga Bulakenyo ang isang pakikipaglaban, kasama ang mga nasa hanay ng pamahalaang lokal, simbahang Katoliko at *non- government organizations* (NGOs), upang mapangalagaan at mapanatili ang makasaysayang Biak-na-Bato na naging saksi sa pagtitiis, pagsisikap at katapangan upang makamit ang kalayaang ipinagdiriwang ng Sambayanang Pilipino ngayon.

Nakalulungkot na maaaring isang araw dahil sa patuloy na pag-abuso sa kabundukan ng Susong Dalaga ay magising na lamang ang mga Pilipinong lumulutang sa panganib kasabay ang pag-agos sa kawalan ng isang kasaysayan ng kagitingan at kalayaan na mahigit sampung dekada na nating pinagbubunyi.

Hinihingi namin sa Sambayanang Pilipino na samahan ninyo kami sa himagsikang ito, tulad ng pagkakaisang ipinamalas ng mga rebolusyonaryong Pilipino na nakipaglaban para sa ating kalayaan.

Gayundin ay hinihingi namin sa ating Pangulong Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo at DENR Secretary Angelo Reyes na bigyang-pansin ang aming hiling sapagkat mahalagang mapangalagaan natin ang isang kasaysayan ng kagitingan na sinisimbulo ng Biak-na-Bato.

Higit kanino man, bilang mga Pilipino, tungkulin nating lahat na alagaan at protektahan ito laban sa pang-aabuso ng iilan. Hindi natin kailanman pahihintulutan na sirain ang mayamang kasaysayan at kalikasan ng Biak-na-Bato sapagkat ito ay pamana ng Inang Bayan sa bawat isang Pilipino, ngayon at sa susunod pang henerasyon.

Ipagbunyi natin ang Araw ng Kalayaan!

Ipagpatuloy natin ang laban para sa Inang Kalikasan!

+ Jose Oliveros
MOST REV. JOSE F. OLIVEROS, D.D.
Bishop, City of Malolos

KGG. JOSEFINA MENDOZA-DELA CRUZ
Gobernador

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para sa mga konsehal sa Bulacan

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para sa mga kapitan sa barangay sa Bulacan

Non-government organizations

(sgd.)CES QUIMPO
Executive Director
Center for Environmental Concern

JOEY PAPA
Paungulo, Bangon Kalikasan Movement

VICTORIANO VILLELA
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MERCI FERRER
Coordinator for Asia Health Care without Harm

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TRIXIE CONCEPCION
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(sgd.) ROY ALVAREZ
President, Mother Earth

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Baliuag Union of Great-outdoor Adventurers

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President, Bulacan Teachers Community Association Confederation Inc.

FR. DENNIS ESPEJO
Social Action Center, Diocese of Malolos

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(PAID ADVERTISEMENT)

BUSINESS

Cell phone penetration rate seen to peak at 50%

Prevailing economic conditions said to affect people's decision to focus more on basic needs

By Daxim L. Lucas

THE NUMBER OF MOBILE PHONE SUBscribers in the country may be capped at only half of the local population as economic conditions compel people to prioritize basic needs, according to telecommunications regulators.

In an interview, National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) chief Ronald O. Solis said the so-called "penetration rate" of cellular phones in the country could plateau at 50 percent, or about 42.5 million Filipinos.

This represents a growth of only about 7.5 million more subscribers from the current penetration rate of 40 percent.

There are about 35 million mobile phone users in the country, at present. The Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. is the market leader, through its Smart Communications Inc. and Pilipino Telephone Corp. units, followed by Globe Telecom Inc.

The expected peak penetration rate of mobile phone users in the country pales in comparison with its neighbors like Taiwan, which has a penetration rate of 111 percent—a situation where many people have more than one cellular phone.

Despite having one of the most innovative telecommunications sector in the region, the Philippines will also remain a laggard behind the Hong Kong market, which has a penetration rate of 91 percent, or the Singapore market where the rate stands at 75 percent, according to the latest edition of the Digital Review of the Asia-Pacific.

The Philippines, however, will likely continue to outpace Thailand's penetration rate of 30 percent and remain only slightly behind the high-technology Japanese market, which has a penetration rate of 60 percent, the same study showed.

NTC's Solis said the country's "economic factors" are the main culprit for this expected cap in mobile phone usage.

"Not all Filipinos can afford cellular phones," he said.

At present, the most basic mobile phone models are already sold on retail for as low as P2,500 per unit, and used units can be bought for as low at P1,000 each. But Solis also said that, for the penetration rate to rise, mobile phone prices must either come down or the country's economic condition must improve.

SEC mulls over fate of ailing pre-need firm

By Elizabeth Sanchez

THE SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISsion (SEC) is now mulling over the fate of pre-need firm Capitol Plans after receiving a recommendation from one of its departments to distribute the assets of the firm among its plan holders, according to a source in the commission.

The SEC source said that the commission en banc has received a number of suggestions, which included the creation of a management committee to oversee the assets of the company.

A full investigation on the company's activities is also being considered.

Sources said that SEC received a number of complaints from plan holders over the activities of the pre-need firm.

Capitol Plans has around 1,000 plan holders.

Capitol Plans' case trails that of another pre-need firm, Asian Diamond. The SEC last year approved the shutdown of Asian Diamond and the distribution of its assets to plan holders. Asian Diamond has stopped selling plans since early last year.

Later, SEC formed a management committee to preserve the assets of the company and protect the interest of plan holders.

The SEC last year found that Asian Diamond had a trust fund deficiency of P13.5 million. To help address its deficit, an American-Singaporean group subsequently bought a major stake in the pre-need firm from previous shareholder Damaso Magbual.

Pre-need firms have grown weaker since last year, when a number of companies went to court, seeking permission to suspend their obligations to plan holders.

Also, pre-need sales continued to slide in April, as the sector reeled from financial difficulties of major firms.

A monthly sales report from the Securities and Exchange Commission showed that sales in April plunged 45.6 percent to P1.2 billion, from P2.2 billion in the same month last year.

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BUSINESS Monday Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Espino

'Learn English then go diving after classes'

Special tourism envoy goes all-out to sell the Philippines to Koreans

RP'S exhibit features a Lucban house adorned with "kiping" or rice wafers used in the Pahiyas festival of Quezon.

By Ronnel W. Domingo

SEOUL, KOREA—JOHN N. OROLA JR. TALKS fast and is full of hand gestures, but he is not arguing for or against a proposed law in Congress.

That was an administration ago. Today, the former representative of Bacolod City is back in more familiar grounds as special tourism envoy handling North Asia which covers Japan, South Korea and China.

"Come to Bacolod City, we are in the island of Negros, just 25 minutes by air from Cebu or an hour from Manila," he tells a travel agent, one of thousands visiting the 19th World Korea Travel Fair held in Seoul recently.

Orola, who has rang up a total of at least 20 years promoting tourism in behalf of the government, is at the frontline at the Philippine exhibit where the main feature is a Lucban house adorned with kiping or the leaf-shaped, multicolored rice wafers used in the Pahiyas festival of Quezon.

Orola is part of a delegation that the Department of Tourism is leading, which includes other government tourism agencies and 22 tour operators, airline operators and hoteliers.

The department has kicked into high gear an aggressive, market-savvy campaign addressing the specific tastes of particular markets and Orola is pushing the envelope further forward with a promotional blitz for his home turf as one of the emerging destinations in the country.

He reels in the now intrigued travel agent: "Check out Negros, you can play golf there and then go diving if you like, or go mountain climbing."

"Really?" The man instinctively asks as he inspects a bunch of flyers that Orola has pushed into his hands.

"You can learn English in our schools there and then you can go see the dive sites after sessions." Orola presses: "Are you married? You can go on a honeymoon in Negros."

He hands the smiling agent a locally made snack of dried squid flavored with Korean ginseng. "Take this, it will make you strong for your honeymoon."

The man chuckles and asks for Orola's business cards.

Orola explains later that Koreans, who represent the fastest-growing group of foreign arrivals to the Philippines, were generally looking for other destinations in the country aside from Manila and Cebu.

DOT-sponsored market studies have shown that Koreans needed to be informed more about alternative activities they could try out in the Philippines beyond enjoying the beach.

Orola has just come out of a meeting with potential partners who could help bring in the warm bodies. He says the talks were "very encouraging" and that Korean investors and travel groups were looking at Bacolod as a possible destination of what they call long-stays, "those who stay for an extended period for leisure."

He is careful about giving out details, but says the Koreans wanted to develop a golf course in Bacolod, which would add to the existing three.

Koreans yearn for warmer climate and things to do to enjoy the sun.

But as Orola's promotional efforts drum up interest in Negros Island, he at the same time also trips alarms against the lack of adequate accommodation and facilities.

There are only about 800 guest rooms in all of Negros, some 500 of which are in Bacolod City.

Still, the picture is more like a chicken-and-egg dilemma. Investors and hotel developers would come in only when they see signs of rising tourist traffic, which depend on proof that a destination has enough rooms and tourist facilities.

"We can approach that on a different direction," Orola says. "The key are the long-stays or in a more direct word, the retirees."

He says that while the current target market among the Koreans are young couples with kids, newlyweds and corporate race rats on the lookout for holidays, the long-stays are an important segment that could tip in investments for infrastructure.

"It is basically the same thing with the Japanese when we visited Japan last May," Orola says. "Travelers need a haven away from their cold winters or from the high cost of living after retirement."

In Japan, social services could not immediately accommodate some six million senior people who are seeking healthcare.

The Japan Long Stay Foundation, an organization that facilitates the travel needs of pensioners, has expressed the desire to help prod the inflow into the Philippines of investment for retirement homes and the complementary healthcare facilities and services.

"Nothing has been put on paper yet, but the Japanese are looking for locations," Orola says. "One advantage for Bacolod and Negros to attract this interest is the relatively peaceful atmosphere there. Compared to the pace of life in Japan, our island may be described as laid-back."

There, too, are other ways to open the gates to Negros. The local golf groups, for instance, have forged fraternal relations with the Cherry Lake Golf Club in Mei prefecture while Bago City has inked a sister-city pact with Nishio City in the Chubu or central region.

Orola says the interest of tourists spawned through exchange visits for golf tournaments, culture and even business would ripple out to the spouses and children who would come along and friends back home who would be told about the trips.

"Korea's case is very similar and to a certain extent even better," he adds. "For one, they are less affected with news about politics and security concerns, they don't care much about these things."

Orola turns to another travel agent that gravitated toward him, "Visit us in Negros and I'll give you free accommodation for a familiarization tour."

"How will I arrange that?"

Orola drops the fish in the net: "Here is my card, call me up and I'll take care of everything."

Franchising: Their business, your business

POPULAR FOR ITS "TURN-KEY" FEATURE, franchising has become synonymous with the relatively painless setting up of businesses and "guaranteed" success. What could be better than to capitalize on ventures that have proven themselves successful, right?

True, but business-hopefuls should know that there is much more to franchising than just paying a fee and building a store.

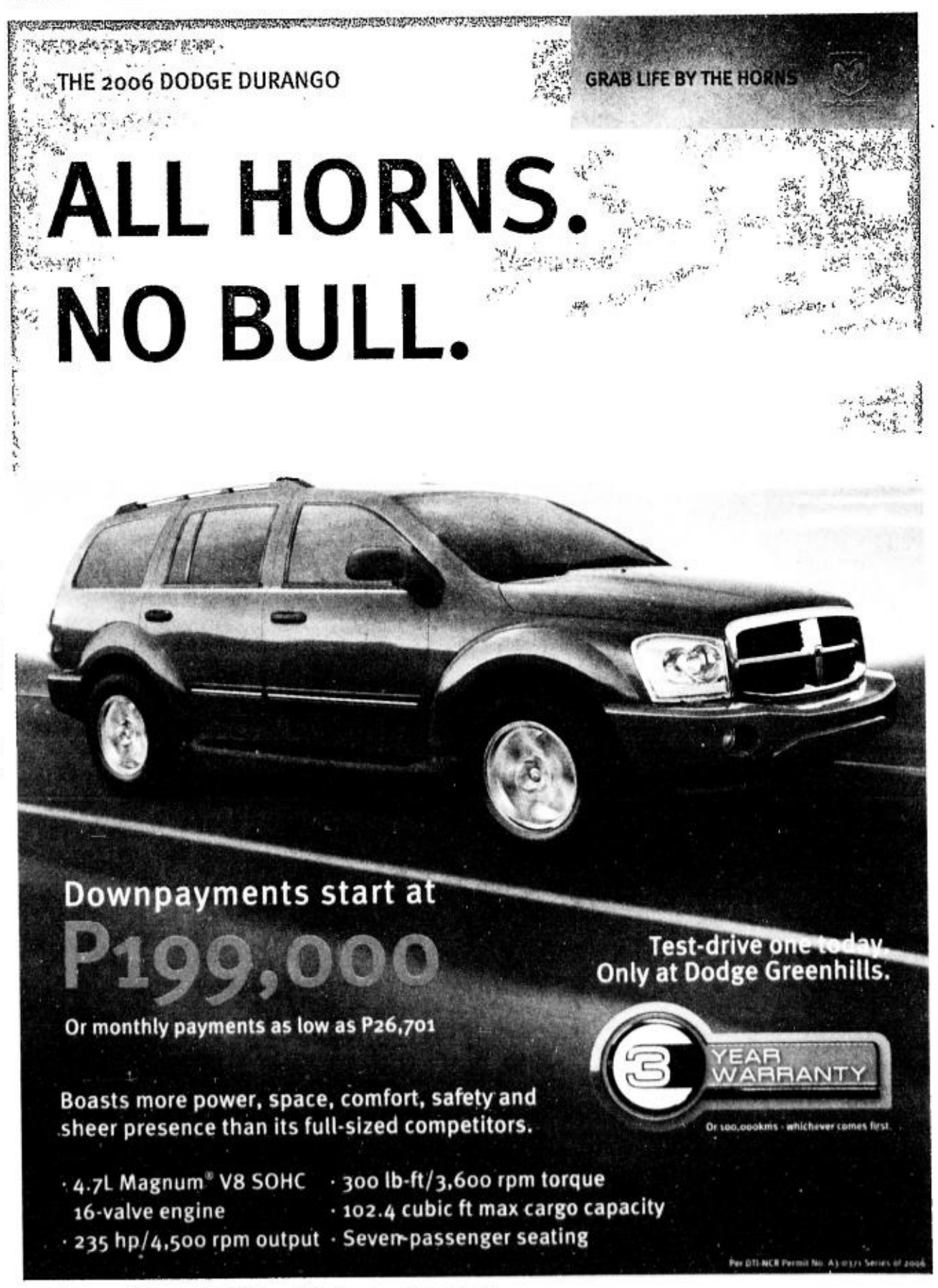
The Association of Filipino Franchisers Inc. will stage the 5th Filipino Franchise Show 2006, "Franchise Fever" on July 7-9 at the Megatrade Hall 2, 5/F, Bldg. B, The Summit, SM Megamall, Edsa. Over 120 exhibitors will showcase their products and services, a 50-percent increase from last year's participation.

Useful insights and learnings can be had in the three-day event. Officers of AFFI and in leaders will be the speakers and facilitators in various topics: everything you need to know about putting up a business, scheduled in the daily forums.

What is franchising anyway?

Dictionaries list franchise as "the right or license granted by a company to an individual or a group to market its products or services." This is how Isaac Singer of Singer Sewing Machines pioneered the strategy. While he was on top of manufacturing, Singer was desperate for help in selling and servicing his sewing machines. Out of this

FRANCHISING/ B2-2



Business judgment rule

Corporate Securities Info
Raul J. Palabrica

ONCE ELECTED, THE MEMBERS of the board of directors have the mandate, acting as a collegial body, to manage the affairs of a corporation.

The board is authorized to formulate and implement the business plans that, in its judgment, would accomplish the purposes for which the company was organized.

Although the stockholders are part owners of the business, they cannot interfere in the board's management of the corporation. They can give suggestions, but at the end of the day, it's the decision of the board that will prevail.

The stockholders may have to wait for the annual regular meeting or the special meetings that may be called to discuss significant corporate issues before they can hold the directors accountable for their decisions.

The prominence of the board in the corporate hierarchy is based on practical considerations. It will be difficult, nay, impossible, for a company to get going if no particular person or group within the organization is given the authority to call the shots.

Broad powers

Except for matters that require prior stockholder approval, the Corporation Code makes the board the instrument through which the powers of a corporation can be exercised.

The conduct of the business and control of the properties of the corporation are also within the board's area of responsibility.

With that authority comes the power to who will fill up the various managerial positions in the company.

But there is no stopping the directors from directly running the corporation if they think they can do it better.

The wide latitude given to the board is premised on the principle that its members are the elected representatives of the stockholders or the owners of the company.

And the stockholders are presumed to have considered their fitness and qualification for the job.

As long as it acts in good faith and what it believes to be in the company's best interests, the board can do anything and everything that the corporation is permitted to do under its Articles of Incorporation and existing laws.

It can even enter into contract with third parties that span beyond the directors' term of office.

Judicial respect

The directors have only the law, the Articles of Incorporation and the law to guide them in their actions.

Of course, if their decisions later turn out bad, the directors responsible face the prospect of being voted out by the stockholders.

Until then, the actions of the board are binding on the corporation and its stockholders regardless of their feelings about them.

Disgruntled stockholders or business people who have bones to pick about actions of the board that adversely affect them can, depending of the attending circumstances, run either to the Securities and Exchange Commission or the regular courts for relief.

While the administrative or judicial route may be available, it bears noting that board decisions are accorded the presumption of regularity and fairness, or the benefit of the doubt.

Dubbed the "business judgment rule," our courts refrain from reviewing decisions made by boards of corporations in the absence of proof of dishonest purpose, bad faith, fraud or gross negligence.

The idea is, until there is solid proof of wrongdoing, the corporation's governing body should be given as much as leeway as possible in administering the affairs of the corporation.

Initiative

Neither the courts not the SEC have any business passing upon corporate decisions that turned sour or expected profits that did not materialize unless there is proof that the directors concerned violated their fiduciary obligations to the stockholders.

A contrary view would put a chilling effect on the initiative and enthusiasm of the members of the board in administering the affairs of the corporation.

It is problematic enough for the directors to satisfy the demands of the stockholders, it's a nightmare if they have to explain their actions before judicial or administrative forums.

(Feedback to rpalabrica@inquirer. com. ph)

Second look at organic farming

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

ONE GOOD THING that came out of the unabated rise in the pump prices of petroleum products is that it forced farmers to look seriously at shifting to sustainable agriculture practices.

A study by The Asia Japan Partnership for Poverty Reduction, a consortium of national and regional NGO networks and civil society organizations working actively on various poverty reduction programs, showed that farmers in India, Indonesia and the Philippines have reduced their consumption of fertilizers simply because these have become too expensive, with prices rising in step with the increase in the prices of petroleum products.

The resulting decline in their income forced these farmers to look at other ways of producing crops, which do not require as much fertilizer and yet will enable them to produce at least the same yield, if not more.

AJPN believes that the solution lies in sustainable agriculture, which refers to a method of growing crops that emphasizes the use of natural fertilizers and crop rotation to coax increased crop production. It also calls for the use of seeds that do not need as much fertilizer to grow and survive.

STUDY shows rice responds well to natural farming technology.

But the question arises: Can sustainable agriculture really fulfill its promise of increased production at less cost, when the prevailing thinking is that increased production can only come from increased use of fertilizers and hybrid, fast growing seeds?

AJPN sought to answer this question by embarking on a two-year product called Enhancing Capacities on Sustainable Agriculture toward Poverty Reduction, which documented how six pilot sites in these three countries fared after two years of practicing sustainable farming techniques.

Pilot sites were Bihar and Andhra Pradesh in India; Central Java and Jogjakarta in Indonesia and Bukidnon and Sultan Kudarat in the Philippines.

The initial results are encouraging, says AJPN executive director Roel Ravanera.

The AJPN study showed that there was increased or at least the same production across most of the project sites in the three countries covered in the research.

Rice, in particular, responded well to natural farming technologies with yield increasing by between 7-10 percent in three of the four project sites that promoted organic rice production.

What the farmers in the project sites simply did was to use organic fertilizers and reduce the use of chemicals for pest control.

AJPN expects production to improve further as the soil becomes more fertile with the use of organic fertilizers.

Production costs per hectare, on the other hand, did not go down as expected.

The report said production costs went up in all project sites by between 4-30 percent as they went into organic agriculture, except for Bukidnon, which produced rice, and Jogjakarta (lima bean).

Bukidnon reported a 17-percent decline in production cost, while Jogjakarta yielded the biggest cut of 24 percent.

"These experiences indicate that it is probably not possible to reduce production costs immediately following the shift to sustainable agriculture," Ravanera says.

He, however, says that the increase in production costs may actually be considered a positive development since the increase was due to the hiring of

SECOND/ B2-3

Franchising: Their business, your business

From page B2-1

necessity came a brilliant idea to grant rights to interested individuals to sell his products, and at the same time, train them on how to service the machines. And this is how product distributorship, one of the four types of franchising, came to be.

Other types of franchising are business format franchising, conversion franchising and multi-branding franchising.

Their business, your business

As a franchisee, you are buying into the success formula established by the franchiser. As such, it is in their interest to make sure their formula is carried out. This is to guide you step by step toward success, since your triumph (or failure) reflects on them as well. Everything from site location to store operations will be evaluated to comply with the company's direction or brand's image.

While franchisees are in charge of their store operations, plans for your franchise are usually dictated by the parent company or at least, should be tailored in conformity to the company's directions. Individuality is a no-no in franchising.

Best for you

If you believe that franchising is for you, the first step is to determine which business to franchise. Here are a few tips:

1. Go with something you know and like. For this, take stock of your interests, hobbies, passions, as this is a good way to know what you will enjoy doing. Corny as it sounds, there is truth to the saying "Do what you love and you won't have to work a day in your life."

2. Know your budget. Compare how much you have and how much it would require to put up your dream biz. Surprisingly there are a lot of promising ventures you can get into for a capitalization of below P500,000. Take a look at the franchise Web page of the Association of Filipino Franchisers, Inc. (AFFI): www.filfranchisers.com for a list of franchises by budget.

3. Do your research. Learn all you can about your prospective business by calling the company, visiting their website or even dropping by existing franchises. Talk to franchisees and ask them about their experiences. Know what exactly is included in the franchisee fee or package, and what company regulations you have to follow. Ask how long it usually takes to build your store, gain customers and get your ROI (return on investment). Know how long has the company been in franchising and how many branches they have to get an idea of your chance for prime locations and rate of return. Gathering information and weighing your options are important in making an informed decision.

4. Consult experts. If you are new at franchising, don't attempt to go through it by yourself. Even with your business acumen, there's bound to be a few things you might overlook which may cost you in the long run. There are people who can guide you through the franchising process.

5. Know yourself. Consider your strengths and weaknesses and how these affect your potential franchise. Does your body clock coincide with their store hours? Are you willing to be on call at any time? How are your problem solving skills? How patient are you? Also, clarify your goals for getting into business. In it for the money, prestige, the experience? What are you willing to do to achieve your goals? How long are you willing to wait? Answering these questions can help you streamline your choices and simplify your task.

Duties and responsibilities of corporate directors

MAPPING THE FUTURE
By Gregorio S. Navarro

FIRST, LET'S DEFINE A FEW KEY concepts:

- Corporate governance refers to a system where shareholders, creditors and other stakeholders of a corporation ensure that management enhances the value of the corporation as it competes in an increasingly global market place.
- Board of directors refers to the collegial body that exercises the corporate powers of all corporations formed under the Corporation Code. It conducts all business and controls or holds all property of such corporations.
- Independent director refers to a person other than an officer or employee of the corporation, its parent or subsidiaries, or any other individual having any relationship with the corporation, which would interfere with the exercise of independent judgment in carrying out the responsibilities of director. This means that apart from the directors' fees and shareholdings, he should be independent of management and free from any business or other relationship which could materially interfere with the exercise of his independent judgment.
- Executive director refers to a director who is at the same time appointed to head a department/unit within the corporate organization.
- Non-executive director refers to a board member with non-executive functions.

The foregoing definitions come from the SEC Code of Corporate Governance which in turn was based on the OECD definitions and principles of corporate governance. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) first endorsed these principles in 1999 which had since become the international benchmark or framework for good governance. In 2004, the OECD revised and updated these principles and it is important that each corporate director knows the basis of all the rules and regulations that govern corporate directorship. The principles themselves are broad and almost no one can argue about their soundness and the proposition that the applications of such principles lead to good governance, and consequently more economic development, increased employment, higher standards of living and ultimately expand worldwide cooperation and development.

There are six OECD principles:

1. Ensuring the basis for an effective corporate governance framework: The corporate governance framework should promote transparent and efficient markets, be consistent with the rule of law and clearly articulate the division of responsibilities among different supervisory, regulatory and enforcement authorities.

This first principle simply asks that corporate governance framework be designed to have a positive impact on economic performance, that the laws and implementing rules be transparent and enforceable and that the regulators have the authority, the integrity and the resources to enforce the law and serve the public interest.

2. The rights of shareholders and key ownership functions: The corporate governance framework should protect and facilitate the exercise of shareholders' rights.

The basic rights of shareholders include ownership registration, right to convey or transfer their shares, obtain relevant and material information about the company on a timely basis, participate in corporate affairs and vote on important issues, elect and remove members of the board and officers, and of course, share in the profits (or even losses).

3. The equitable treatment of shareholders: The corporate governance framework should ensure the equitable treatment of all shareholders, including minority and foreign shareholders. All shareholders should have the opportunity to obtain effective redress for violation of their rights.

Simply stated, the same class of shareholders should have the same rights and privileges and should be treated equally. The minority should be protected from any abusive action by the majority.

4. The role of stakeholders in corporate governance: The corporate governance framework should recognize the rights of stakeholders established by law or through mutual agreements and encourage active cooperation between corporations and stakeholders in creating wealth, jobs, and the sustainability of financially sound enterprise.

Often stakeholders are mistakenly referred to only as shareholders, stakeholders include everyone who is affected by the company: its employees, its officers, creditors, suppliers, customers, regulators, the community, indeed even society as a whole, are often stakeholders to an enterprise. Their interests, which may sometimes conflict with one another, should be taken into account at all times.

5. Disclosure and transparency: The corporate governance framework should ensure that timely and accurate disclosure is made on all material matters regarding the corporation, including the financial situation, performance, ownership and governance of the company.

The new international accounting standards, in fact, now mandates that the compensation of the board and key officers be disclosed in the notes to financial statements, as well as all related party transactions. Risk management objectives and policies and the company's governance structure and policies are now all required disclosure to the public.

6. The responsibilities of the board: The corporate governance framework should ensure the strategic guidance of the company, the effective monitoring of management by the board, and the board's accountability to the company and the shareholders.

The OECD is very specific on the duties and responsibilities of the board and all of its members, they include the following:

a. Act on fully informed basis, in good faith, with due diligence and care, and in the best interest of the company and shareholders.

b. Treat all shareholder groups fairly.

c. Have high ethical standards and consider interest of various stakeholders.

d. Key functions of the board:

i. Review and guide: Strategy, action plans, risk policy, budget, set performance objectives, monitor performance, oversee major, capex, acquisitions and divestitures.

ii. Monitor corporate governance practices.

iii. Select, compensate, monitor key executives, (including succession planning or replacement).

iv. Align key executive and board remuneration with long-term interest of the company and shareholders.

v. Ensure formal and transparent board nomination and election process.

vi. Monitor and manage: Potential conflicts of interest, misuse of corporate assets, abuse in related party transactions.

vii. Ensure integrity of financial reporting.

viii. Oversee process of disclosure and communications.

e. Exercise objective independent judgment on corporate affairs:

i. Consider sufficiency on non-executive board members.

ii. Define mandate, composition and working procedures of various board committees.

iii. Ability to commit themselves effectively to their responsibilities.

f. In order to fulfill responsibilities, board members should have access to accurate relevant and timely information.

In some regions, two-tier boards are implemented: a supervisory board that is mostly non-executives and a management board consisting of purely company officers. In the Philippines, what we commonly have is what is called a unitary board, which combines both executive and non-executive members, but sometimes an advisory board is created to kick-up retiring board members or reward government Gliterrari. Public companies are required to have at least 20 percent of its board members, as independent directors.

Conclusion

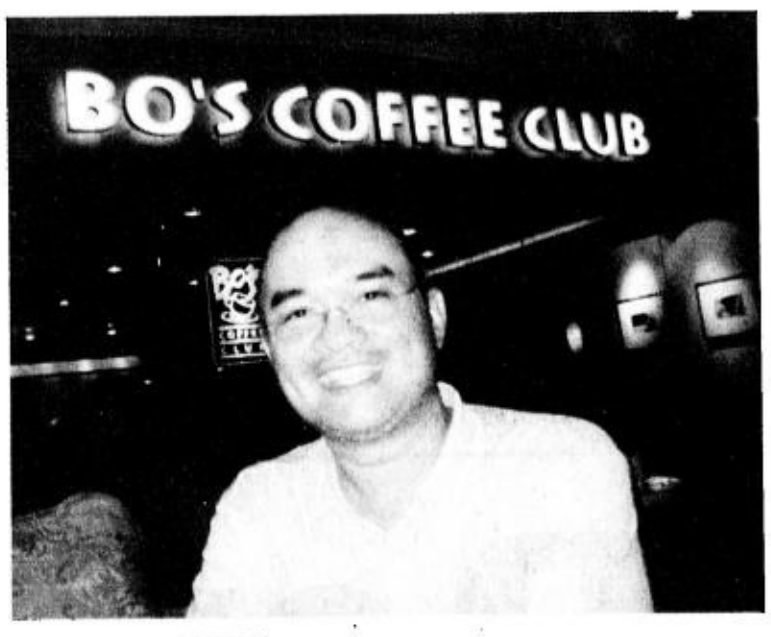
The responsibilities of directors are daunting, as they are important to the success or failure of any corporation. Not only are board members expected to be the guardians of the interest of all their stakeholders. Not only are directors the guardians of their interests, the board members are actually expected to act in the "best interest" of such stakeholders—and who is to say what really is in their best interest?

In whatever they do, or you do as a director ... you must give due regard to the interest of everyone, you have to deal fairly, act with integrity, serve with care, observe due diligence and transparency, protect the community and safeguard the environment—all of these you have to do while creating wealth, generating employment, maintaining a healthy cash flow, reporting profits and serving society ... In other words, you need to act like a saint, decide with the wisdom of King Solomon, and be as shrewd as a fox. If this description fits you, then you are close to being the perfect corporate director.

(The author is managing partner of Punongbayan and Araullo and chair of the MAP corporate governance committee. The MAP secretariat and the author may be reached via mapsec@globenet.com.ph

Cebu coffee chain brews in Manila

By Doris C. Dumlao



STEVE "BO" BENITEZ

CEBU CITY—LONG BEFORE the gourmet coffee shop culture dawned in Manila, this Queen City of the South has produced a specialty chain patronized by the discerning market. And it's one that has thrived even with the influx of big foreign competitors in recent years.

Bo's Coffee Club, founded by Atenean entrepreneur Steve Benitez, has established a formidable foothold in the Visayas-Mindanao area even before Starbucks set up its first branch in the country.

Expanding in Manila

This Cebuano-owned gourmet coffee chain wasn't in a hurry to enter Metro Manila but knowing that such a huge market can't be bypassed, Bo's Coffee Club has been expanding to selected sites in the metropolis since opening its Glorietta shop two years ago.

"Competition is good for us because it challenges us to work harder and to do better at the same time," Benitez says in an interview with the INQUIRER.

This gourmet coffee chain now has 27 branches, mostly in major cities like Davao, Cagayan de Oro, Iloilo, Bacolod, Tagbilaran and Tacloban.

It has five stores in Metro Manila, the latest of which is located at the country's biggest shopping complex, the SM Mall of Asia.

Passion for coffee

Benitez got into the business to make the most out of his longtime passion for coffee.

"I traveled a lot and every time I'd go out, I'd always find myself in a coffee shop. I love the total experience. I love coffee. Sitting down in a coffee shop when you travel, that's the only time when you don't mind sitting alone. You can sit down, look around and read," he says.

Sometime in 1994, while bumming around in a coffee shop in the US with a friend, Benitez realized he had to bring this concept to the Philippines.

When he came back, he was determined to put up an enterprise that would share the gourmet coffee experience to the community. For two years, he "immersed" himself in the coffee shop culture—studied the business, attended seminars and exhibitions and explored the different settings in the US, Europe, Hong Kong and Singapore. By 1996, he mapped out his business plan.

At first, the idea seemed implausible. The people around him said they wouldn't spend so much for a cup of coffee. They wanted instant coffee instead! About 90 percent of the people he asked said the gourmet coffee wouldn't sell.

"That's the hard part of being an entrepreneur. You'll feel alone and lonely: You believe in your concept but everyone else does not. But you've gotta move, you've gotta do it," he says.

He was thus ambivalent at first. After all, he picked up the gourmet coffee shop concept in the US while sitting in a nice veranda amid a cool climate. Not in a dusty place like the Philippines.

"But when I went to Singapore for a food show, I saw all the coffee shops and people were drinking coffee under the heat of the sun. If it could work in Singapore, it could work here . . . all systems go!" he notes.

In 1996, Benitez started with something small—with P300,000, he opened his first shop—an unassuming kiosk inside the airconditioned Ayala Center here. He had a small machine, six tables and he started out as an all-around guy: A barrista, a barrista trainor, manager, driver and delivery boy. He was 29 then.

He named it after his nickname, Bo.

Benitez used earnings from his first business in Cebu—a small *shawarma* chain he took over in 1993. He still has four shawarma stalls.

Discouraging

"Outrightly discouraging" was his description of the first few months of operation. The people, unfamiliar with the concept specialty coffee, was easily turned off by the price tag. The fledgling coffee shop had to give out a lot of free samples, to let the people discover the taste of freshly brewed coffee.

"For the first three months, I was giving away a lot of coffee to educate the market," he says. "The only way for them to acquire the taste was to give it for free," On the 8th month, the business picked up and he opened a second shop.

He mortgaged idle land, given to him by his parents to raise funds for the second and third branches.

Every year for five years, he opened a new store. On the sixth year, he opened two to three more. Last year he opened five new stores.

Bo's Coffee Club plans to open at least five stores a year to reach a network of over 50 stores. Each store requires a fresh investment of P5 to P6 million.

Benitez is a proponent of franchising. Out of 27 stores, 12 are franchises.

Bo's Coffee Club is looking at expanding abroad. The chain has received inquiries from Macau and Hong Kong for possible tie-ups.

Benitez is confident Bo's Coffee Chain can continue competing head-on with the likes of Starbucks despite having fewer stores in Metro Manila.

"For me, it's inevitable so I took it as a challenge. Bo's more than a business; it's something that I like to do. The bonus is the financial side of it," he says.

Differentiation

Bo's Coffee Club distinguishes itself primarily by roasting its own beans, which are mostly locally produced and sourced from the coffee farmers of Mountain Province, Benguet, Bukidnon, Sultan Kudarat.

"In less than a week's time, it's roasted, packed and consumed. Every pack that we have has a roasting date. When it goes beyond a certain date, we throw it away."

By going straight to the farmers and bypassing the middlemen, Benitez notes that the farmers get a much better price for their produce and they are being encouraged to produce more.

"We want to support these farms. The idea is to make Philippine coffee popular in the Philippines first before it could be popular abroad. Why would foreigners want to buy your coffee when the locals don't?" he notes.

He says coffee price in the local market is too low that farmers don't have incentive to farm. As such, the local producers can't even supply the bean requirements of the local market.

The secret to a good cup of coffee, Benitez says, is to use fresh coffee beans, the right machines and tapping expert barristas.

"We're not aspiring to be as big as they are. We just want to be good at what we're doing," Benitez says.

His role model is Tony Tan Caktiong, whose Jollibee Foods Corp. dominates the local fastfood industry and makes the Philippines the only country in the world where McDonalds is not number one in the business.

"We can't give up the fight for Cebu and for the Filipino," he says.

Advance flower arrangement set

THE GOLDEN TREASURE SKILLS DEVELOPment Program will conduct a one-day seminar on advance fresh flower arrangement to be held at the Benitez Alumni Center, Ylanan Street, corner Magsaysay Avenue, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City on June 18, Sunday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Topics to be discussed are sourcing of materials, costing, flower shop operation. There will be a hands-on experience on how to make the latest trend in floral designs such as shadowing, structural techniques, etc.

Participants will receive certificate of training. Food will be served, materials will be provided. For questions call 952-40-28 / 952-29-34/ 436-78-26/ 951-29-66 and 913-65-51.

Investing in termite control

IN THE US, ESTIMATES SHOW TERMITE damage costs about $2.5 million (some P125 million) yearly.

There are no official figures on termite damange costs in the Philippines but lack of funds results in destruction of infrastructure yearly.

Termites are so efficient that no attempts at termite-proof construction have ever been completely successful. These unwanted pests leave lasting marks that destroy what could otherwise have been beautiful structures.

Paying for termite control entails a huge amount. But for those who want to ensure their homes never get infected, the only choice is to pay the price.

Sentricon, a baiting technology developed by US-based Dow Agro Sciences, cites a Ohio State University and the University of Kentucky's Entomology Department study that claims the Sentricon system is an effective solution to the problem of recurring termite infestation because in eliminating worker termites, it curtails proliferation of colonies that causes infestation.

The firm claims the Sentricon Termite Colony Elimination System is used to prevent termite infestation for important historical landmarks such as the Statue of Liberty, the White House, and the centuries-old Iolani Palace, the Hawaiian monarchy's former residence turned museum.

Sentricon Termite Colony Elimination System targets worker termites, which are the food hunters of the termite colony.

For questions on the termite colony elimination system, call 840-3874, 815-9273, or visit www.sentricon.com.

World Cup spells big bucks

SPORTS MEAN BIG BUSINESS AND THE RECent opening of the World Cup highlights the huge marketing funds channeled by big firms in the event.

For the sixth consecutive time, Philips is an official partner of the 2006 FIFA World Cup which kicked off in Germany on June 9, supporting and promoting this ultimate festival of football with an ambitious program.

By drawing on products and solutions from across its healthcare, lifestyle and technology portfolio, Philips aims to help make the 2006 FIFA World Cup an unforgettable event for its millions of fans around the world.

Philips is heavily involved in different ways at the stadium and official viewing events, as well as in homes. At eight of the 12 sporting stadiums, Philips technology lights up the action with unique color and brilliance through its ArenaVision technology, the first sports lighting system designed to enhance theater and emotion in sports. Selected stadiums also feature Philips' Vidiwall technology, giant video screens that capture the action in razor-sharp detail.

World Cup organizers are using Philips' smart card solutions for access to stadiums. The smart card technology provides comprehensive access control that is simple to use. Using Philips chip technology, the contactless smart cards provide unprecedented levels of functionality and scalability in the stadium, as well as convenience, and ensures the safety and security of millions of fans.

Putting in mind the well-being of spectators, staff and players, Philips is also providing 125 safe and easy-to-use HeartStart defibrillators at every stadium for emergency cases such as cardiac arrests.

All these of course involve a price tag.

For the duration of the 2006 FIFA World Cup, Philips is also lighting the Reichstag in Berlin, the German seat of government, using a combination of halogen lamps and light-emitting diodes (LEDs) to highlight the architectural splendor of the historical landmark as well as the night sky for football fans and tourists alike.

Second look at organic farming

From page B2-2

more workers to do the composting and farming.

"While it appeared as additional cost to farmers, it in turn benefited farm workers in the community and the local agricultural economy in general," Ravanera says.

But what the AJPN is banking on to make up for the increase in production costs is the premium they can command for producing organic food.

Ravanera says the timing for promoting sustainable agriculture could not be better considering that the demand for products grown through sustainable and organic agriculture is growing, and consumers are willing to pay more for these products.

The AJPN took note of Sultan Kudarat's successful marketing of muscovado sugar.

The study showed that after two years, the volume of muscovado production increased 14.66 percent, and the selling price also rose from P29 to P35.14 a kilo of muscovado sugar, resulting in a 15.41-percent increase in the farmers' income.

"The experience of farmers in Sultan Kudarat showed that upgrading product quality and establishing better market linkages have a positive effect on price," Ravanera says, "Initial investments in muscovado processing justified the price increase, and yielded a net return on investments of 15.3 percent."

Ravanera says that while two years is not enough to make definite conclusions, the results do support the view that sustainable agriculture practices can improve the lives of the farmers by giving them an opportunity to ride on the rising demand for organic food.

Sustainable agriculture, however, has not made its way into government policies or popular practice because there is a cost to weaning farms away from fertilizers.

The cost will also include additional training of farmers, retooling of the skills of agriculture technicians and possibly the incorporation of sustainable agriculture practices in the curriculum of agriculture schools.

Also, it is simply harder to practice compared to conventional, fertilizer dependent agricultural practices, as it will mean additional labor for composting, for example.

But as the initial results show, the extra effort put into shifting to sustainable agriculture practices pays off in the end.

■ LAS NACIONES / C1 ■ DEPORTES / A36 ■ METRO / A7 ■ DIVERSION / A2-1

El país Entero prepara para la celebración grande de Día de Colonia

Defienden el equipo del fútbol para realizar en el partido de exhibición

Guardia Civil prende a líder del rapto el anillo

Kristina gana la actuación más grande el premio. La comunidad del entretenimiento sorprendió

email: comentarios@examinador.com.ph

DIARIO FILIPINO
EXAMINADOR
NOTICIAS EQUILIBRADAS, VISIONES AUDACES

El monte Everest vuelve justo a tiempo para celebración

Por Maria Teresa Reyes

EL PRIMER INDIOS PARA SUBIR JAMÁS MONTE. Everest llegó ayer y formará parte de la celebración grande de la Colonia que sucede mañana. El equipo presentará al Gobernadorcillo y el Rey una copia de la bandera .

EL MONTE/ A6

Conocer a nuestra mascota: El Torito

Por Rodrigo Velazquez

Somos felices de introducirle, nuestros amados lectores, nuestra completamente nueva mascota: El Torito.

CONOCER/ A6

Lunes, de Junio el 12, 2006 ★★ 6 secciones / Vol. 22 / No. 184 P18 website: www.examin7.net

Viva El Rey

El Rey Fernando IV en Manila para la celebración

Por Ricardo Tres Reyes

El REY FERNANDO IV LLEGÓ ayer con el resto de la familia real a celebrar el aniversario 441 de la colonia. El Gobernadorcillo estaba en el aeropuerto de saludar oficialmente al rey y su familia.

Del aeropuerto, una caravana de automóviles trajo al Rey fue traído a Malacañang. La ruta entera fue llenada de miles que quiso ver y saludar a su alteza real.

Un plan apretado de la seguridad para celebraciones Coloniales de Día se ha ordenado en la capital filipina el lunes, funcionarios de ejército y policía dijeron, aún como ellos contradijeron informa de nuevo eses rebeldes de izquierdista planeaban asesinar el Gobernadorcillo.

Siguiente una conferencia de la orden en las Fuerzas armadas la Orden Principal Nacional de la Región (NCRCom) el sede en el Campo Magallanes el jueves, los funcionarios anunciaron que 6.000 policías patrullarían Metro Manila el lunes mientras 300 fuerzas de aumento del ejército se colocarían en el soporte por.

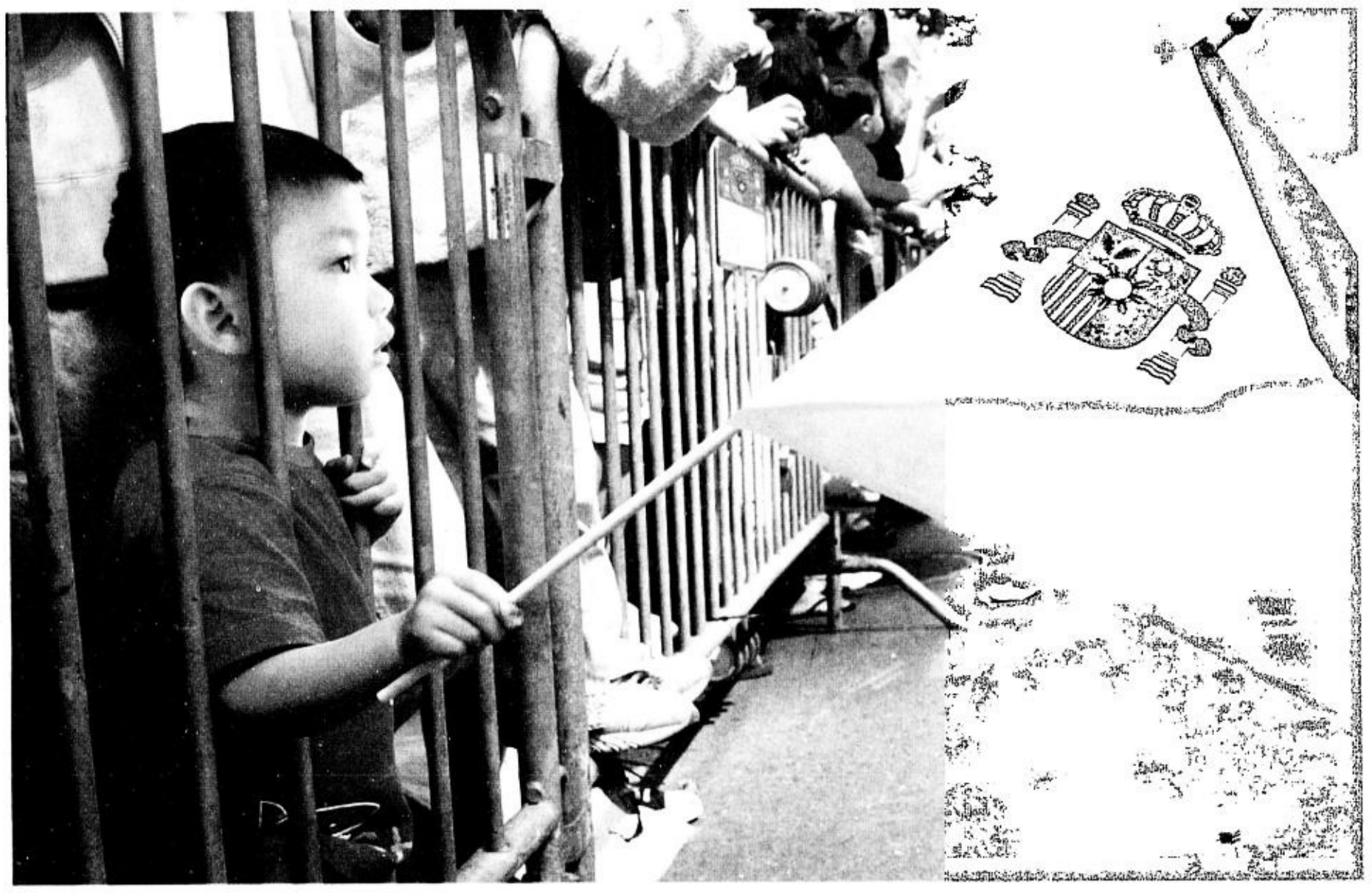
El Gobernadorcillo se pone a entregar su dirección Colonial de Día en el Parque de Magallanes en el centro Manila mientras líderes de militantes e iglesia son puestos a tener la calle las protestas para bloquear sus esfuerzos de enmendar la Constitución.

"Aseguramos que las celebraciones Coloniales de Día serán pacíficas especialmente desde que muchos VIPS vienen," la Oficina Principal Nacional de Policía de Región (NCRPO) el Vencedor principal de Director Querubim dijo.

"Nosotros no descontamos la posibilidad que algo quizás ocurra, pero al ahora, nosotros no hemos recibido los informes acerca de esto [acerca del complot pretendido del asesinato, pero nosotros no tomamos cualquiera acaece," Villarama dijo.

Cuándo preguntó si la falta de informes verificados de inteligencia acerca de la tentativa pretendida del asesinato contradijo la lista negra comunista Su padre empezó a balbucear acerca de Proyecto: La ave de rapiña y nanomachines que

VIVA EL REY/ A15



MILES Vinieron al aeropuerto para dar sus bienvenidas a nuestro querido Rey.

Se aceptan los indios en las mejores universidades

Por Elmira Concepcion, Diego Manuel e Isabel Nueva

LUCINDA DOMINGO DEBE considerarse afortunado.

Ella va a la Universidad Nacional en Makati—uno del corre mejor en el país.

Tiene a todos los estudiantes básicos de servicios en la mayoría de las universidades filipinas pueden sólo sueño de.

El de 16 años de edad de una casa de la clase media en Bangkal obtiene los cuadernos libres, las plumas, los lápices, los cuadernos, los zapatos, las bolsas, los uniformes, los impermeables.

Todavía, lo que ella obtiene no son suficiente. "Carecemos las facilidades, como laboratorios. Las computadoras se comparten," ella se queja correctamente.

Ella dice que ella hace bien. Pero en términos generales, la escuela no es, juzgando por los resultados de las Pruebas Nacionales del Logro realizadas en 2004 por el Departamento de la Educación (DepEd).

El más de primera categoría era una escuela pequeña en el telemando Septentrional de Samar y municipio empobrecido de Corre a pasos largos de Vega.

Corra a pasos largos de Vega la Preparatoria Nacional no tiene los medios que suy laescuelas

INDIOS/ A15

LOS estudiantes de la Universidad Nacional en su primer dia de la escuela.

EL ESTADO DE LA EDUCACIÓN:

No hay bastantes maestros para los cientos de nuevos estudiantes

Por Juan José Campillo

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ESTADO/ A6

Los Gobernadorcillo aprobo un aumento de P125 a los sueldos

LOS trabajadores en Central electrica Nacional feliz de recibir la paga mas alta.

Por Cristina Gonzales

MALACAÑANG HA PERMITIDO que el de 125 pesos legislara el aumento de sueldo que ha empezado mover en Congreso cinco años después que se propuso. El secretario de prensa Emilio Esguera dijo que el aumento fue determinado por las tablas regionales del sueldo, que tiene un se siente mejor de las necesidades de trabajadores a través del país. "Apreciamos el concierne de la Cámara de Representantes para el bienestar del asalariado ordinario, pero mantenemos que las tablas regionales del sueldo serán el mejor mediodijo enregión

AUMENTO/ A6

LET US NOT TAKE OUR FREEDOM FOR GRANTED. It makes a world of difference. The Philippine Daily Inquirer proudly celebrates Independence Day.

ADVT.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

LIFESTYLE

Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

Subsection Editor Lito B. Zulueta

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The 'real' National Artists

HAJA Amina Appi, master weaver of complex mats from Tawi-Tawi

UWANG Ahadas, Yakan music and performing artist of Basilan

SAMAON Sulaiman, Maguindanao music instrumentalist

The Gawad sa Manlilikha ng Bayan is the National Artist Awards for the folk arts. Some critics call it the more important award since it honors what is truly Filipino art, not western-oriented art

THE WORKS AND FULL-blown depictions of the National Living Artist Awardees have been given an exclusive home at Tesoro's. The 11 National Living Artists are recipients of the Gawad sa Manlilikha ng Bayan Awards, or Gamaba Awards, which are selected by the National Commission on Culture and the Arts and conferred by the President of the Republic.

President Macapagal-Arroyo herself will formally open the Gamaba Collection exhibit at Tesoro's in Ermita, Manila, on June 17.

GMA's presence underscores the importance of the traditional folk artists as bridges between the past and the future. Her presence, like the award, recognizes living folk artists' attainment of the highest level of excellence in their vocation and their commitment to pass on their knowledge and artistry to generations to come.

Created by Republic Act 7355 in 1992, the Gawad sa Manlilikha ng Bayan Award provides for the recognition of National Living Treasures and for the promotion and development of traditional folk arts.

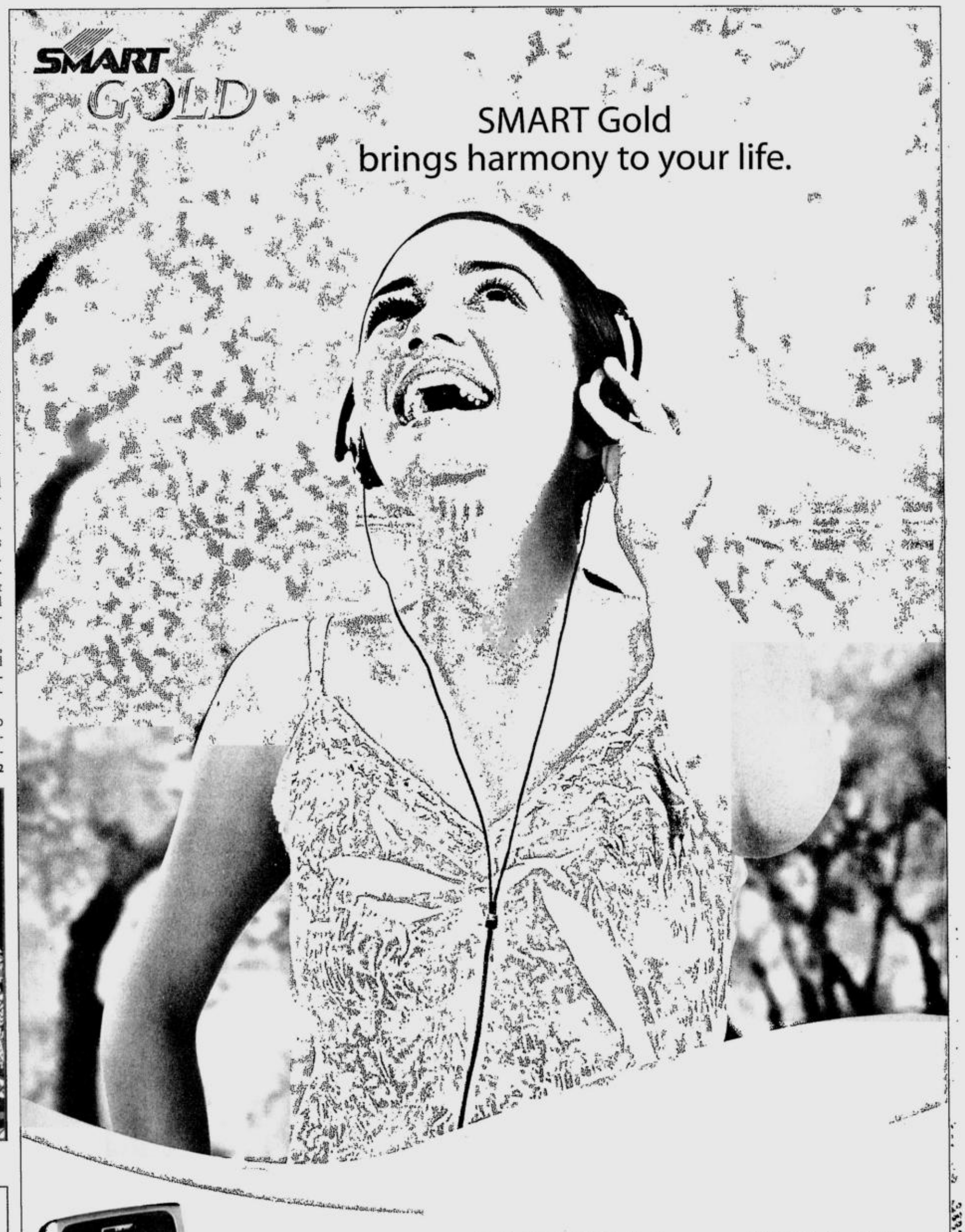
The award endows a lifetime stipend to the artists to enable them to train apprentices who will continue and preserve the tra-

THE 'REAL'/ C2

LANG Dulay, T'boli *tinalak* weaver

Father knows best

FOR AN UPCOMING STORY in the Sunday Lifestyle section, tell us in 150 words or less what's the best piece of advice your father has given you, or what's the most important lesson you've learned from your father. Deadline is June 14. E-mail to dad2reader@inquirer. com.ph. Or mail to PDI-Lifestyle Section, PO Box 2353, Makati Central Post Office, 1263 Makati City, attn: Dad to Reader. Or text to 09183824061. Include your full name, address and phone numbers.



SALINTA Monon, Bagobo *ikat* weaver

ALONZO Saclag, Kalinga dance and music master

DARHATA Sawabi, tapestry weaver of Sulu

The 'real' National Artists

From page C1

ditional folk art of the Philippines.

Since its creation in 1992, only 11 Filipino artists have been honored with the Gamaba Award.

For excellence in traditional weaving: Lang Dulay of South Cotabato, for preserving the T'boli tradition of *tinalak* on *ikat* cloth; Salinta Monon of Bansalan, Davao del Sur, for maintaining the Bagobo art of abaca *ikat*-weaving called *inabal*; Haja Amina Appi of Tandubas, Tawi-Tawi, a master weaver of complex mats; and Darhata Sawabi of Jolo, Sulu, for her dedication to *pis syabit* tapestry-weaving.

In the field of silversmith and metallurgy: Eduardo Mutuc of Pampanga, for reviving and excelling in both secular and scared arts in silver, bronze and wood.

Folk literature

In folk literature: Ginaw Bilog of Mansalay, Oriental Mindoro, for preserving the Hamunuo Mangyan script and Ambahan poetry; and Federico Caballero of Iloilo, for his mastery of the Sugidanon chants and other native oral traditions.

In the field of traditional performing arts: Samaon Sulaiman from Maguindanao, for his mastery of native Maguindanao instruments; Masino Intaray from Palawan, for his skills in epic chanting and for sustaining the Palawan tradition in music; Alonzo Saclag from Kalinga, a master and innovator of Kalinga dance and music; and Uwang Ahadas of Basilan, for his devotion to the preservation of Yakan music and performing arts.

Now on its 61st year, Tesoro's, the Philippines' first name in handicrafts, chose to showcase the Gawad sa Manlilikha ng Bayan Awardees and their outstanding works through the creation of an exclusive and long-running exhibit on the fourth floor of the Tesoro Building at 1325 A. Mabini St., Ermita, Manila.

Assisting in the exhibit are travel broadcast journalist Susan Calo-Medina, Daily Manila Shimbun, Cebu Pacific Air, Philips Electric and Victory Liner.

The Gamaba Collection exhibit is open to the public Monday to Saturday, 9 a.m.-7:30 p.m., and on Sunday, 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Call 5243936 to 40.

PIS syabit by Darhata Sawabi

INABAL by Salinta Monon

AMBAHAN etched on bamboo tubes by Ginaw Bilog

MASINO Intaray, epic chanter of Palawan

GINAW Bilog, Hamunuo Mangyan scribe of Mindoro

VISUAL ARTS

Group show at West

"Mirror/Mask," an exhibit curated by Roberto Chabet, features the latest works of Bembol dela Cruz, Ranelle Dial, Carlo Gernale, Eufemio Rasco IV and Christopher Zamora. It opens on June 13 and runs until July 8, at West Gallery, Mary Santos Artcade, 48 West Ave., QC. Call 4110336 or 4119221.

"MASK," by Eufemio Rasco

"BELL Tower Behind Red Brick Pillar," by Jucar Raquepo

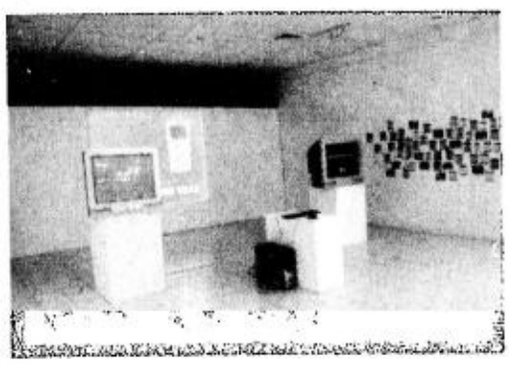
Raquepo at Boston

Jucar Raquepo presents his 10th one-man show, "Structures of Past Life," until July 5, at Boston Gallery at 72 Boston and Lantana Sts., Cubao, QC. The exhibit features a series of impasto canvases of places and structures from the Spanish period such as churches, convents and plazas. Call 7229205.

Culaba at Blanc

"Pagkakaayos" is Melvin Culaba's third solo exhibit and his first after his fellowship at the Vermont Art Center last year. A major prizewinner in the AAP Annual, Culaba probes into the question of how things are structured within the artist's familiar territories. His long and swift brushstrokes result in lush detail, and the seemingly inappropriate colors just fall into place. The characters inside his paintings have their own stories to tell, and somehow the viewer is drawn to the stories. The show runs until June 17, at Blanc, 2E 107 HV De la Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City. Call 7520032/0920-9276436 or e-mail info@blanc.ph

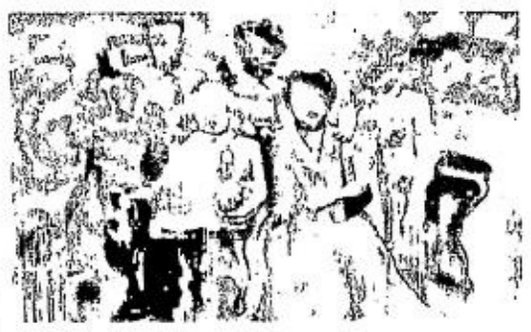
"PAGKAKAAYOS," by Melvin Culaba



"VIDEO of treasured text," by Popi Primadewi

Quinto, Primadewi at Liongoren

"Malaya Ka Ba?" is an interactive art show by Indonesian artist Popi Primadewi and Filipina artist Alma Quinto. It opens today, at 6:30 p.m., at Liongoren Gallery, 111 New York, Cubao, QC. The exhibit will present Quinto's installation featuring freedom flying breasts (soft sculptures). Primadewi will present SMS messages she received as an Asian Public Intellectual fellow of the Nippon Foundation. The exhibit will run until June 27. Call 9124319.



"FAMILY Portrait," by Don M. Salubayba

Salubayba at CCP

The Cultural Center of the Philippines presents "Imaje Nacion/ Imagined Nation" by Don Maralit Salubayba, at the Bulwagang Fernando Amorsolo (Small Gallery), until July 9. The exhibit is a collection of multimedia pieces composed of wall-bound works, video pieces and puppets that were conceptualized and produced during and after the artist's residency at the Headlands Center for the Arts in Sausalito, San Francisco, and at the International Studio and Curatorial Program in New York. Call 8323702.

Kawayan de Guia at Boston

Ongoing until July 5 is a multimedia exhibit by Baguio-based contemporary artist Kawayan de Guia at the Boston Gallery. "Junktion Box" features De Guia's surprising prolific energy and wit. It includes, among others, a papier machè of Rizal monument, whose form was embellished as a glorified "coin bank." Call 7229205.

"ANG Batang Naglalaro," by Benny Buendia

Daquioag at Artists-Run

Artists-Run Independent Art Space presents "Hero," a one-man exhibit by Thomas Daquioag. Art Space is at 318-A LRI Business Plaza, Nicanor Garcia St., Makati. The exhibit will run from June 14-27. Call 8959837.

Buendia at De las Islas

Galeria de Las Islas in Intramuros presents Benny Buendia's one-man show "Balik Tanaw sa Probinsiya," until June 25. The exhibit features more than 20 paintings with subjects on country scenes rendered in oil on canvas. Call 5272113.

'Kamukha' at UP Vargas

UP Jorge B. Vargas Museum features "Kamukha: Portraits from the Jorge B. Vargas art collection" at the Kawilihan Gallery beginning June 13. The portraits are of Don Jorge B. Vargas, the Vargas family, state officials from the Commonwealth to the post-Japanese occupied Philippines, and studies of now anonymous individuals. The portraits tell different and varied stories of the country's history, as well as Philippine art and portraiture from 1890-1960. "Kamukha" presents the concepts of likeness, representation and interpretation, as well as projection, convention and patronage. The portraits are by the brothers Fernando and Pablo Amorsolo, Romeo Enriquez, Fablan de la Rosa, Fortunato Jervoso, Fermin Sanchez, Cesar Buenaventura, Josè Pereira, Ben Alano and Nestor Leynes. Lectures and sessions on portraits and portraiture will be conducted by Romulo Galicano, Ed Lantin and the Saturday Group. "Kamukha" runs until July 30. Call 9281927 or e-mail vargasmuseum@gmail.com

'Historical Markers' at De las Islas

"Historical Markers," a commemorative exhibit of artworks with a special emphasis on Philippine heritage, is ongoing until June 30, at Galeria de Las Islas, 3/F, Silahis Center, 744 Gen. Luna St., Intramuros, Manila. The exhibit features works of Gil Sermeno, Antonio Doctor Garcia, Claude Tayag, Danilo Lodronio and National Artist Napoleon Abueva done in diverse media such as pen and ink, watercolor, intaglio print, brass and resin. Call 5272113.

Shakespeare's characters recast in Disney animation

"TAMING of the Shrew," by F. Guinguyon

By Gino Dormiendo
Contributor

FLORENCE MAGTOTO GUINguyon II has also been enamored with the the Bard's plays, which he has been reading since high school, so that he has been trying to make the characters come to life in his drawings.

Thus, in his major exhibit this year, the artist chose as subjects character from such immortal plays as "Romeo and Juliet," "A Midsummer Night's Dream," "Taming of the Shrew," "Hamlet" and "King Lear." Though initially drawn to abstraction, Guinguyon has since used the style of animation in exploring the Shakesparean characters' follies and transgressions. He has an apt name for them: "Shakespeare's Fools," Astra Gallery, LRI Bldg., Nicanor Garcia St., Bel-Air, Makati (until June 22).

A graduate of fine arts from Feati University in 2000, the artist was an eyewitness to the Mt. Pinatubo eruption, which displaced his family then residing in Mabalacat, Pampanga, one of the worst-hit places. He was forced to relocate to Angeles City and later to Manila, where he ultimately finished his college. He also joined art competitions, winning the Grand Prize in Shell National Art Competition in 1996.

The exhibit, "Shakespeare's Fools," posits the one true thing that pervades his plays: the characters have, by virtue of their wanton acts, made fools of themselves. They have, at the end of the play, to make the supreme sacrifice, by paying the high cost of their indiscretion, chicanery or reckless daring, with their very lives.

Guinguyon, who works as a animator of Walt Disney cartoons locally produced for worldwide consumption, admits he has resorted to animation techniques to highlight particulars scene and delineate the characters' fantastical attitudes and gestures. With his mastery of watercolor techniques, he has devoted more time to establishing his characters' nuances.

The founder of Pitong Agimat Art Group, Guinguyon has initiated a number of shows to raise funds for charity. The current show's beneficiaries are the GMA Kapuso Foundation and Friends of the Cultural Concerns Foundation. An artist with a heart for the disadvantaged, he is also a drummer and percussionist, often writing his lyrics and composing original music.

"TWO Colors" in Seoul, Korea. Kim Eun-ok and Fidel Sarmiento

"MEMORIES of the Past," by Sarmiento

AAP head in Korea

The head of the Art Association of the Philippines (AAP), Fidel Sarmiento, now on his second term, has just come back from a successful show in Seoul, Korea, where he held a joint show with a Korean artist, "Two Colors" last summer.

The sequel to the "Two Colors" show held at the Gallery Genesis last year, the Seoul exhibit showed Sarmiento's signature paintings of stately ancestral houses, their *fin-de-siecle* interiors, and the gentility of life during those times.

For her part, Kim Eun-ok, a member of the Korean Fine Arts Association, mounted her charming watercolor paintings. The range of her oeuvre is phenomenal, more so since they use watercolor, a delicate medium to handle. There are still-lifes, landscapes and seascapes of utter delicacy.

Equally admirable are her renderings of naturescapes, almost effortless, limpid, truly devoid of self-conscious devices.

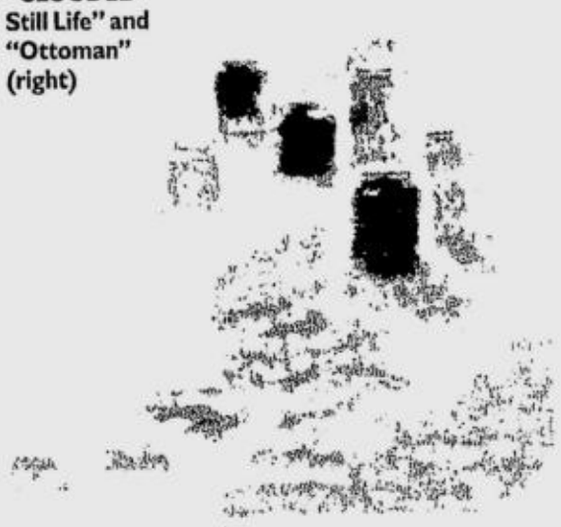
Sarmiento's works are mainly a reworking of his signature subject, but with a more pleasant palette and brushwork that borders on hyperrealism and magical denouement.

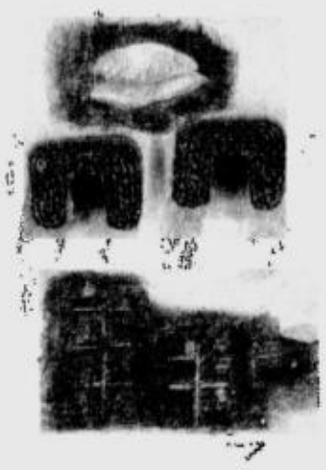
The artist said he had a pleasure filled 10-day trip around Seoul, the Korean capital with plenty of time for interaction and sightseeing. He swore the Koreans are among the most hospitable people on earth.

The trip was doubly memorable for Sarmiento because he was able to observe closely the art scene in Korea. When he gets the chance to play host to visiting Korean artists in August, he will do his best, as always, to provide a sampling of what Philippine art and culture have to offer.

E-mail author at gdormiendo@yahoo.com

"CLOUDED Still Life" and "Ottoman" (right)





Avellana marks 3rd year

MARKING AVELLANA ART GALLERY'S THIRD anniversary is Lilia Lao's "Recent Drawings and Others," which opens today. Composed of a suite of works that occupies the gallery's three exhibit rooms, the show features Lao at her finest and broadest: still-lifes suffused with resonant color, chairs and windows deftly veiled in mystery and shadow, faces on the verge of either happiness or grief. The strokes, at once surefooted and intuitive, are rendered with compassionate attention and a clear heart, nudging the viewer to come closer to a magnificently distilled space of light, silence and hovering objects. Exhibit runs until July 8. Avellana Art Gallery is located at A-19, 2680 F.B. Harrison St., Pasay City (fronting Gideon Academy). Call 8338357.

Philippine industrial design's .

From page C4

be either a water transporter or dispenser. It can be converted as a hand trolley by simply sliding the five-gallon water bottle inside the front compartment and tilting it backwards for mobility. It transforms into a water dispenser by removing the pin locks and using the handlebars as a lever to lift the heavy water bottle, minimizing the stress on the users back when lifting the container to the dispenser.

Design exhibits such as "Paglulunsad" support the cause of the Philippine creative industries in looking for effective ways to create a nurturing environment that promotes the value and skills of creative people in their pursuit of economically rewarding endeavors. They highlight the positive contribution of the Philippine creative industries in nation-building.

Paglulunsad 2006 can be viewed Monday to Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., at the Product Development and Design Center of the Philippines, Cultural Center Complex, Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City. Call 8211112, fax 8323649, or e-mail pddcp@dti.gov.ph

Heritage watch

On June 17, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., the Museum Foundation of the Philippines and Barangay Bel-Air will hold Art in the Park, patterned after the art fairs of the Royal Society of Art in London and Rocks Arts and Crafts market in Sydney.

To be held at the grassy area in Velasquez Park adjoining the Salcedo Community Market, the event is set to become the venue for the sale of paintings, prints, photographs and sculpture within the affordable threshold of P20,000.

Art in the Park aims to attract, through the low prices of the artworks, buyers not necessarily familiar with art scene. Artists will have a chance to display their works in an unusual venue and to a general audience. A percentage of the selling price goes to the Museum Foundation the Philippines.

"Art is for all walks of life," said Maribel Ongpin, president of the Museum Foundation of the Philippines. "Every person finds his humanity fulfilled in art."

Art in the Park is spearheaded by Bel-Air Juniors and Museum Foundation members Trickie Lopa and Lisa Periquet, the duo behind the highly successful Salcedo Community Market. To celebrate the market's second anniversary, they thought it fitting to launch an endeavor inspired by the vision of community service and conceived along the market's pioneering spirit in support of Philippine visual arts.

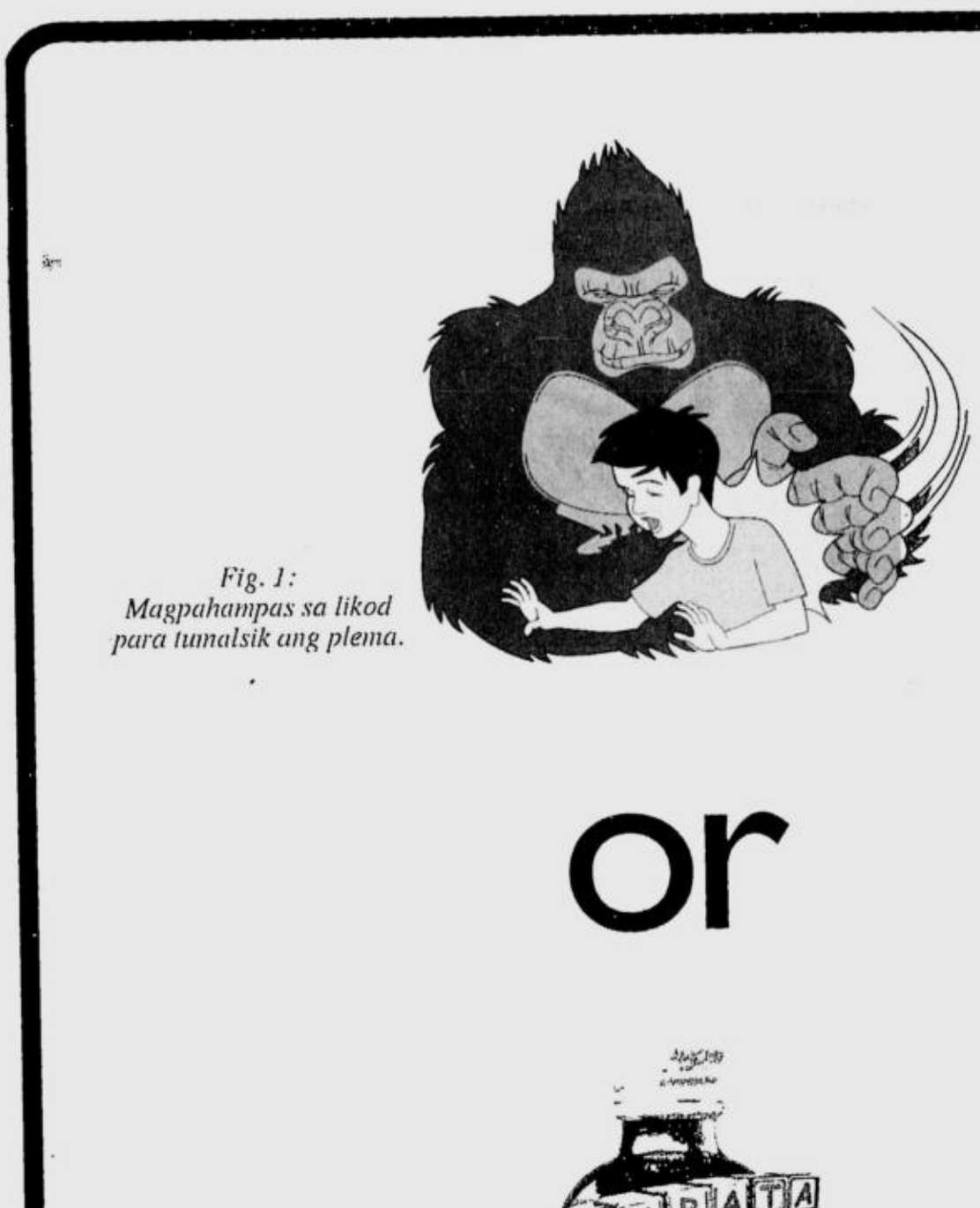
The Art in the Park logo, designed by Pepper Roxas, features a little *maya* bird—a local bird and frequent visitor of parks. The early bird catches the worm—in this case, early risers get the best art!

Art in the Park presents artworks shown in the Drawing Room, Boston Gallery, Liongoren Gallery, Galleria de las Islas, SilverLens and Art Inday. Students from the UST College of Fine Arts and Design and L'Arc en Ciel, as well as members of Ilustrador ng Kabataan and Kasibulan, are participating.

Other artists include Lanelle Abueva, Alma Quinto, Emmanuel Garibay, Daniel Coquilla, Alfredo Liongoren, Jeho Bitancor, Jojo Lofranco, Isa Lorenzo, Derek Soriano, Pinky Urmaza, Kiko Escora, Maya Muñoz, Winner Jumalon and Dindon Cordova. Also included are Rodel Tapaya, Marina Cruz, Ian Quirante, Tatong Torres, Jojo Ballo, Pablo Capati, Tibor, Joel Ajero, Mia Herbosa, Elaine Herbosa, Riel Hilario, Emet Valente, Antonio Garcia, Benny Buendia, Crisanto Ladronio, Danilo Sola, Brian Vallesteros, Abi Goy, Beth Parrocha, Liza Flores, Patty Eustaquio, Inday Cadapan and Phylis Zaballero.

The Museum Foundation's annual general assembly is on the same day. Members must attend the opening ceremonies at 9:30 a.m. Call 4042685 or 0918-5850383.

E-mail the author at pride.place@gmail.com



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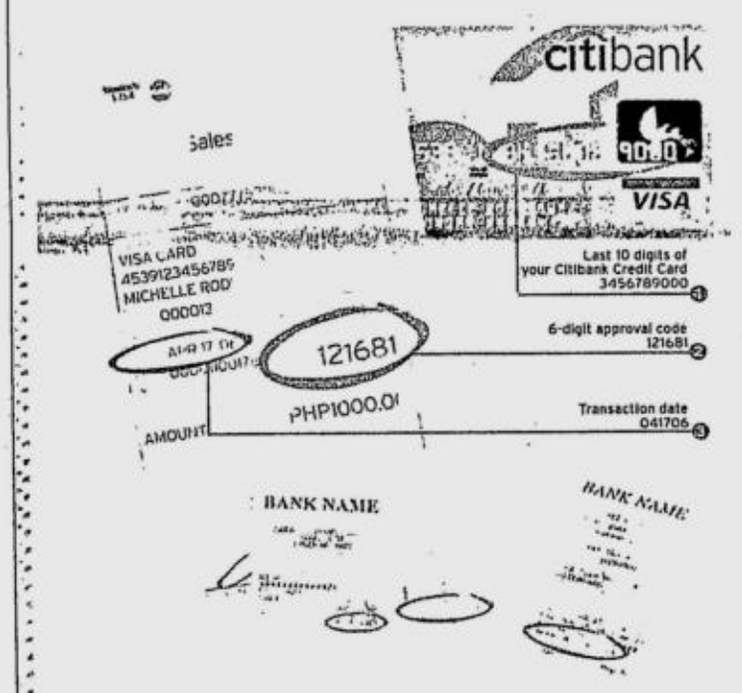

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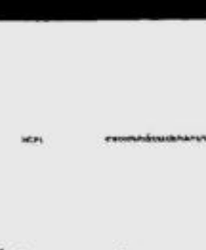
Philippine industrial design's steady growth

IN THE PHILIPPINES, THE creative industries have long been an unrecognized force in the national economy and in nation-building.

Industrial design is a little-known discipline within the scope of the creative industries, a profession with two aspects. One aspect is communications design, which covers exhibition and spatial design, graphics, environment, packaging and photography. The other aspect is product design, which includes the design of tools, agricultural and medical equipment, products, furniture, gifts, and houseware.

PRIDE OF PLACE



Augusto F. Villalon

Unlike the single, one-of-a-kind works of fine art produced by painters and sculptors, the industrial designer's output is utilitarian and commercial. Designs are not meant to be works of art or handcrafted objects but are utilitarian objects designed for mass production and commercial distribution.

The Product Development and Design Center of the Philippines (PDDCP), organized in the early 1970s by the Philippine government, was charged with reviving vanishing crafts and improving the quality and competitiveness of Philippine export products.

To be able to implement its mandate, the agency pioneered the industrial design profession in the Philippines, eventually establishing professional degree courses at Mapua Institute of Technology, Philippine Womens' University, La Consolacion College (Bacolod), University of the Philippines, University of Santo Tomas, and DLS-College of Saint Benilde.

The industrial design profession has been a quiet success. It achieved the reengineering of Philippine export products from the "cheap and cheerful" handicrafts of the 1970s to the trend-setting, highly sophisticated furniture, gifts, and houseware objects that the Philippines is known for in the world market today and that are exhibited yearly at the Manila and Cebu Fame Market Weeks and in the major product fairs in Europe, Asia and the United States.

The local clamor for "export quality" products attests to the industry's success.

The services of Philippine product designers are in high demand in the local export manufacturing industry. Foreign manufacturers hire Philippine designers and take them overseas to update their designs. For many years, Philippine designers have served as respected product advisers for international trade agencies such as the ITC-UNCTAD/GATT, Unido, and others.

"FIREWORKS," a winning creation in the 5th Fine Jewelry Design Competition, Provincial Design Image of Bulacan

VASES and lamps made from stained glass by Anna Vida of PWU

PHILIPPINE Creative Industries Working Committee head Nestor Jardin looks at works of Industrial design graduates.

The work of the 2006 crop of industrial designers is now on exhibit at Paglulunsad 2006 at the exhibition hall of the PDDCP. Be amazed at the outstanding range of products designed by Industrial Design graduates.

The range of work at the exhibition is amazing.

Paolo Bustos of DLS-Benilde presents I-Relax, an ankle-rehabilitating device featuring a stable leg-raiser that elevates the inured ankle and lessens pressure on it.

Mark Anthony Ambionof DLS-Benilde designed the Transpenser, a double-function product that can

PHILIPPINE/ C3

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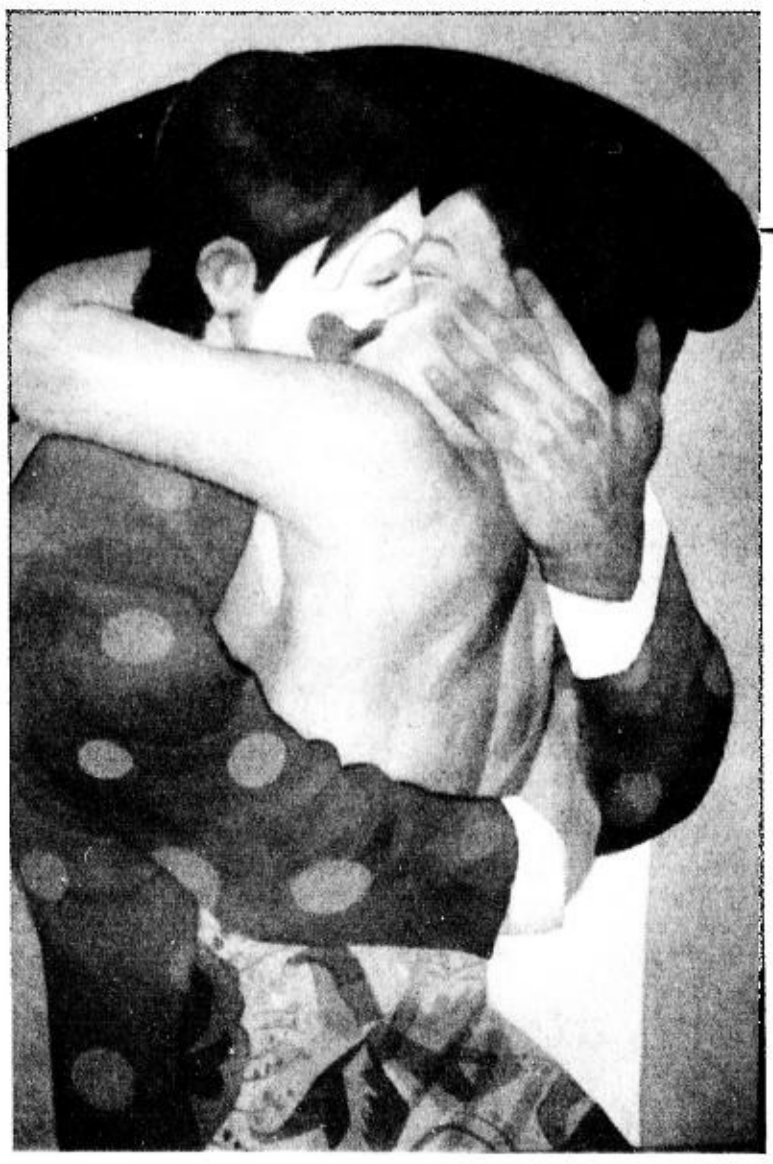


"KISS"

Obemio's art of the trickster

'Circus of Life' takes a playful, deadpan but critical look at innocence and struggles

By Gary C. Devilles
Contributor

EVERY PAINTER IS A storyteller, and Roel Obemio's "The Circus of Life" exhibit at Le Soufflé at the Rockwell Club in Makati, narrates a story we all know too well—a story of lost innocence and perhaps the possibility for its recovery.

The familiarity of Obemio's works stems not from the banality of themes and concepts he uses, but rather from the striking, unintentional resonances of the trickster/clown archetypes depicted in his paintings.

Whether this trickster is passionately embracing a lover, playing the violin, flying a kite, or even planting seeds, the trickster is a refraction of what Filipinos are, both in the personal and collective levels.

Obemio believes that the trickster communicates a sense of his personal struggle to be happy and to be witty despite the pain in the deadpan workaday world—an attitude that every Filipino would surely recognize as his own as he reckons with the complexity and sometimes, inanity, of the world he lives in.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the Filipinos is known as a hopeless romantic—whether he is crooning a love song, kissing his wife before leaving for work, or even pretending and imagining that the world is like a fun merry-go-round. Romance is the very air the Filipinos breathes in.

"HOME At Last"

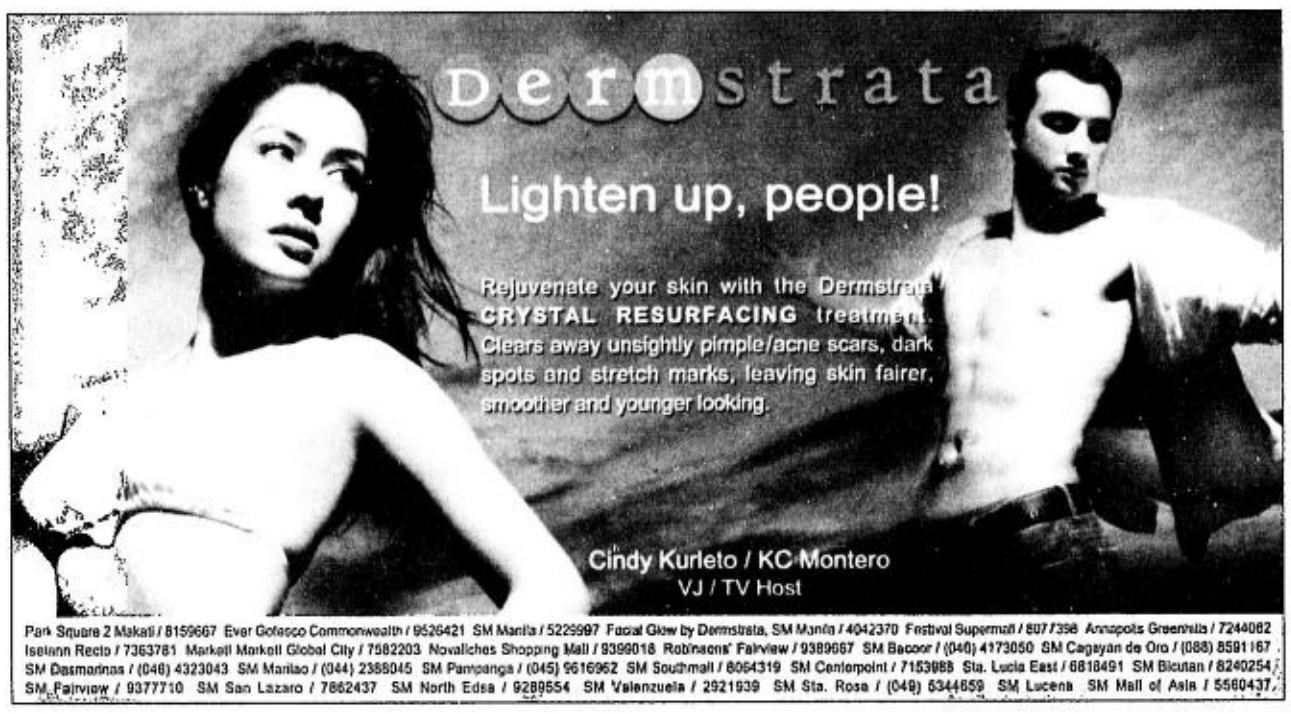
Although Obemio's romanticism comes naturally for him, his vision as an artist exceeds the common romantic's. Far from the mundane, Obemio's romanticism is not a concession to idiocy but a sincere commitment to critique.

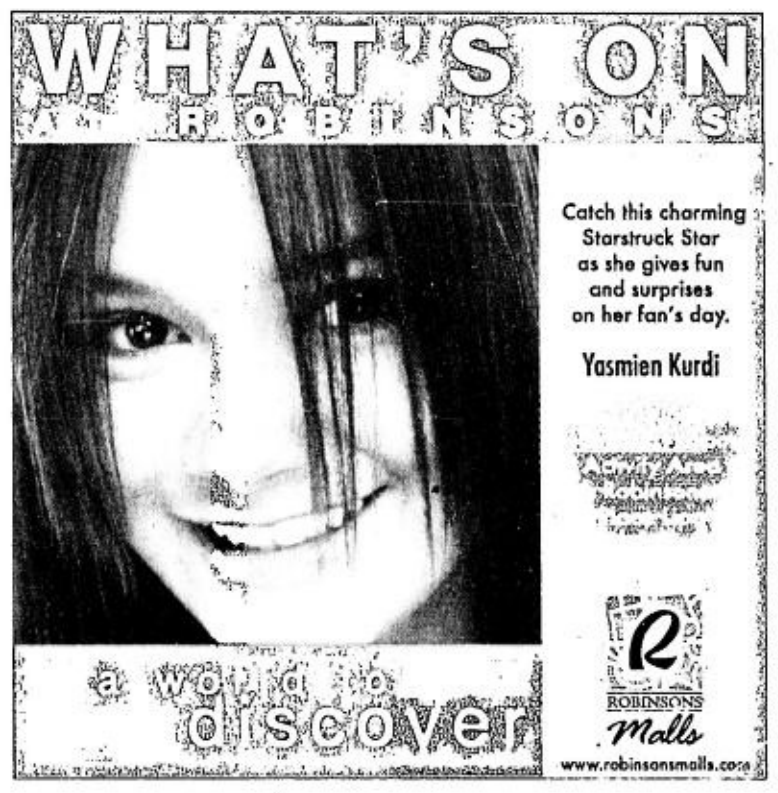
So when he paints children seeking a mother's embrace, he intimates the Filipinos' felt powerlessness, an unconscious yearning to be cared for by an all-loving mother. Whether this all-loving figure is a benevolent hierarchy, God or humanity, Obemio sees the essence of innocence among Filipinos. Such innocence becomes all the more singular considering the problems that beset the country.

Inner struggle

A scene of children playing may be common to us all, but in

OBEMIO'S/ D3





HEY, DAD, READ THESE

'My Dearest Children'

By Michael C. del Rosario

The author says that the collection of short essays started out "to be a simple compilation of my experiences. I wanted to share with my children bits and pieces of wisdom picked up through the years. I did not wish life's lessons to be buried with me someday."

Michael writes that when he told his friends about this "legacy" book project, "they were inspired and wanted to share my compilation with their children. Some have started writing to their children for the first time!"

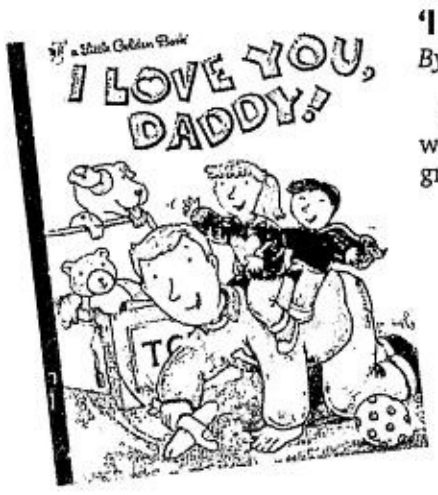
'Butterfly Kisses'

By Bob and Brooke Carlisle

In this moving narrative poem, Bob Carlisle and his daughter Brooke recapture the emotions so eloquently expressed in Bob's hit song which reached the top of the pop, country, Christian and adult contemporary song music charts. Told in conversational verse between father and daughter, "Butterfly Kisses" celebrates the shared love, trust and hope that create a unique bond between father and daughter. This Little Golden Book is a must-have for every daughter's bookshelf.

'I Love You, Daddy!'

By Edie Evans



Daddy, I love you, and I want you to know, I have a great time wherever we go.

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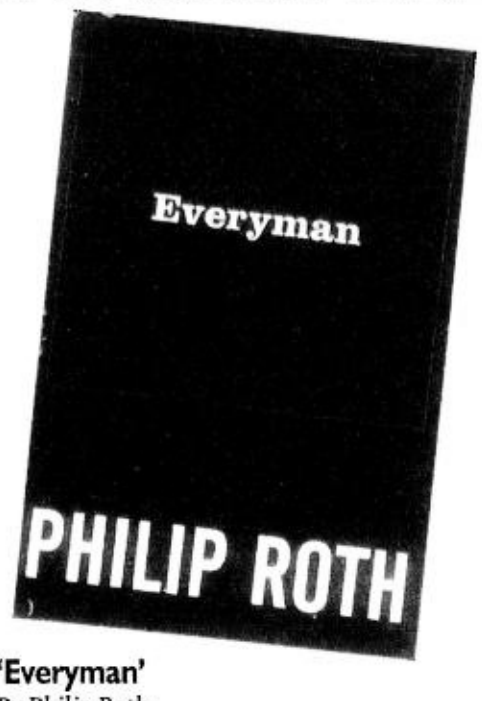
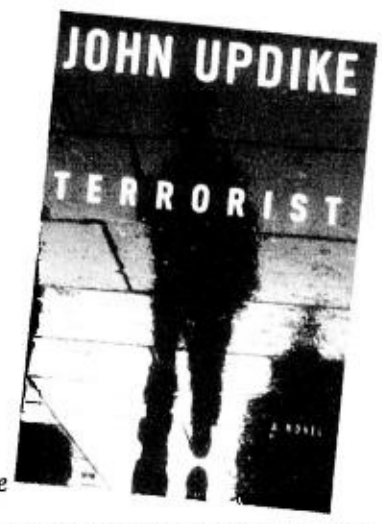


'Everyman'

By Philip Roth

The fate of Roth's Everyman is traced from his first shocking confrontation with death on the idyllic beaches of his childhood summers, through the family trials and professional achievements of his vigorous adulthood, and into his old age, when he is shattered in witnessing the deterioration of his contemporaries and stalked by his own physical woes.



'Terrorist'

By John Updike

The ever-surprising John Updike's 22nd novel is a brilliant contemporary fiction that will surely be counted as one of his most powerful. It tells of 18-year-old Ahmad Ashmawy Mulloy and his devotion to Allah and the words of the Holy Qur'an, as expounded to him by a local mosque's imam.

Asian governments' stewardship of forests a dismal failure, book says

THE ASIA FOREST NETWORK (AFN) AND the Environmental Science for Social Change will launch "Communities and Forest Stewardship: Regional Transitions in Southeast Asia," on June 16, 6:30 p.m., at the Manila Observatory, Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola Heights, QC.

"Communities and Forest Stewardship," written by Mark Poffenberger, Rowena Soriaga and Peter Walpole, is a regional synthesis of trends in developing policy and implementing programs in forest lands. The study is based on the experiences of the AFN working with forest-based communities in Cambodia, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam.

According to the foreword by Dr. Poffenberger, the shrinking of Southeast Asia's primary rainforests, from over 250 million hectares in 1900 to less than 60 million hectares in 1989, happened under the legal stewardship of national forestry agencies that have failed to sustainably manage industrial timber concessions in millions of hectares. While certain forest lands have been converted to other uses because of growing population, most have been unsustainably exploited and left degraded.

"Communities and Forest Stewardship" urgently calls for a paradigm shift in how forest environments have been perceived and managed by governments. The dominant model of professional foresters—under the ultimate direction of the central government—primarily controlling up to 70 percent of each nation's land area has failed dramatically.

The publication is a joint project of the AFN and the Community Forestry International, with major support from the European Community Tropical Forest Budget Line, and is distributed by Ateneo de Manila University Press. Call 9260452 or 4265984.

Poetry Week and Fathers' Day performances at Mag:net

MAG:NET KATIPUNAN WILL MOUNT THREE readings cum performances starting June 14 at 6 p.m., with the "Back to School Reading" led by Ramon C. Sunico, whose installation work, "In Vino: Bruise Decantata," is on exhibit at the Poet's Alcove.

Joining him are Jimmy Abad, Krip Yuson, Karina Bolasco, Lourd de Veyra, Joel Toledo, Angelo Suarez and Marie la Vina.

On Friday, June 16, at 6:30 p.m. is "O My Papa!"—an open-mic reading of poems for fathers, and the launching of "Honoring Fathers: An International Poetry Anthology,"—published by UP Press and edited by Abad and Yuson.

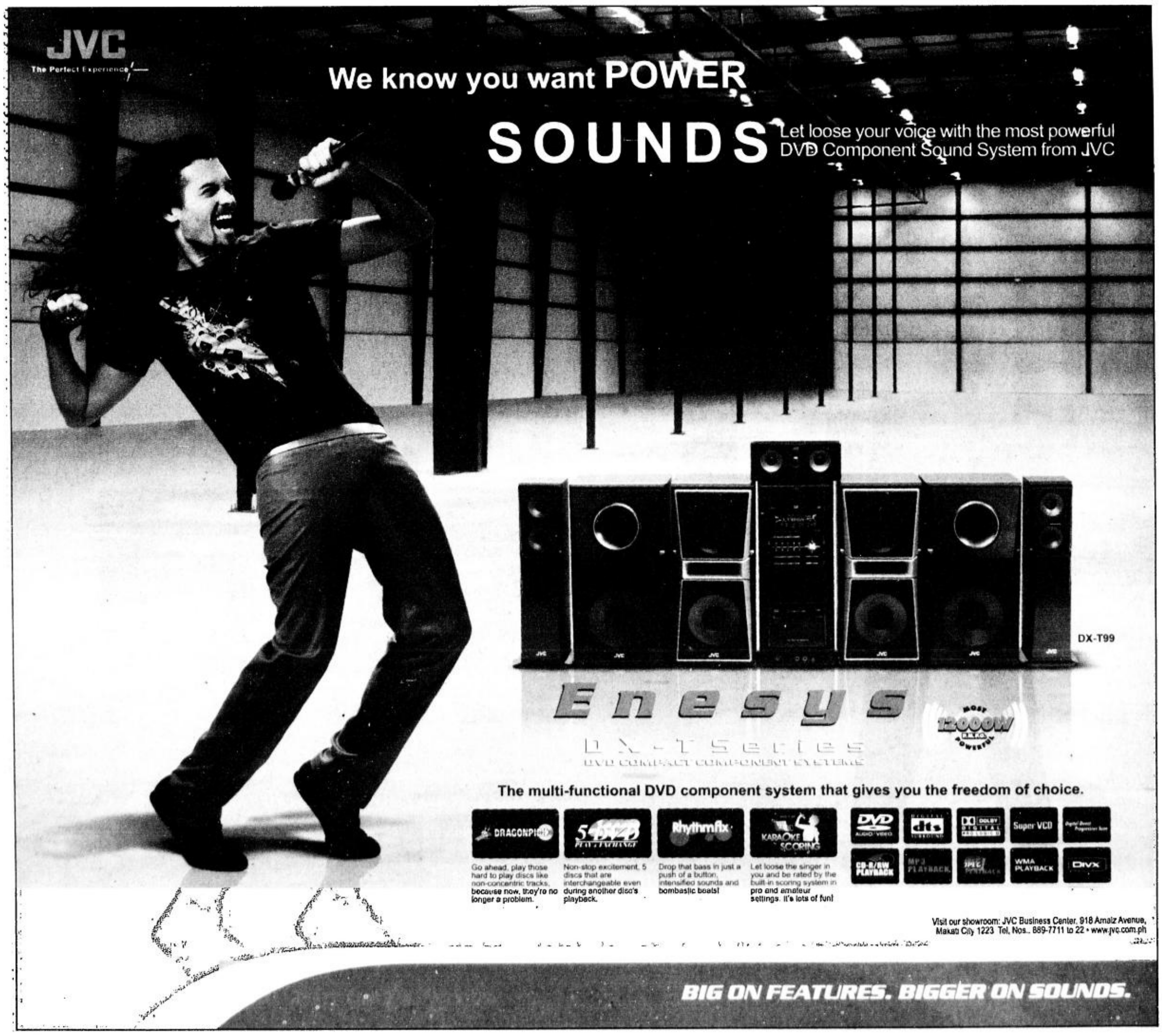
To signal the event, Brigada, an 11-member percussion group from UP, will perform at the deck starting at 5:30 p.m. Readers include Angelo Lacuesta, Alma Anonas, Israfel Fagela, Larry Ypil, BJ Patino, Mikael Co, Naya Valdellon, Arkaye Kierulf, Bea Lim and Happy Ferraren. Anyone with a "father poem" is welcome to join the reading.

Capping the week, also on June 16, at 8 p.m., is the performance of "Cesare & The Electric Underground Collective." Syjuco will accompany two of his own poems with a rare '68 Gibson Les Paul Standard, playing solo guitar through a trio of Hartke garage band amplifiers.

"The sound you get from this crude equipment is incomparable," says the poet-musician. "Seriously speaking, it occupies a sonic vibe that's somewhere between a fart and sacred music..."

Guests readers/performers include Maxine Syjuco, Ronnie Lazaro, Vim Nadera, Pow Martinez-Ria Munoz, Jim Libiran, Suarez, Jevijoe Vitug, Ian Madrigal, Mitch Garcia, Lirio Salvador, Ronaldo Ruiz, Natasha Betita, Cos Zicarelli, Mike Mendoza, Danny Sillada, Nimbus 9 and punk rock icon Bob Balingit.

Mag:net Katipunan is across the Miriam College gate and beside Rustan's Supermarket on Katipunan Avenue, Loyola Heights, QC.



"EMBRACE"

"AFTERGLOW"

Obemio's art . . .

From page D1

Obemio's paintings, children's game intimates, too, that inner struggle, which, according to the psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud, is an unconscious compensation for disenchantment that children experience when their parents are not around.

Hence, it is important to understand the interplay of innocence and its loss in the paintings of Obemio, where the trickster plays a dual role of pretending and criticizing, the pretense probably of assuming a better world than what one has and the critique of existing oppressive situation one is in.

The trickster, one must remember, wears a mask and whether this mask conceals a hidden smile or reveals the facade that Filipinos most of the time find themselves in, Obemio articulates and visualizes it powerfully in his works.

Obemio is quite the trickster too in search of answers even at a young age. His curiosity with the world of colors started at a young age of three when his parents gave him a set of pencils and watercolors as gifts. He also recalls the colorful slides in a set of encyclopedia that his parents bought for him.

After stints of freelancing for animation, he decided to become serious with his work by studying the artworks of renowned masters like Malang, Legaspi, Kiukok, and Bencab. Eventually, he joined the Saturday Group and the Art Association of the Philippines where he met peers more than willing to help him.

Obemio admits that he's still honing his craft and still trying to find his niche in the industry. His constant consultation with top artists like Malang and Salvador Convocar provides not only guidance and comfort but also inspiration to experiment on familiar forms, themes and concepts. He also hopes to venture on more important subjects like the degradation of the environment and the Filipino's rich heritage. He believes that an artist should also be an agent of change.

Obemio may indeed be the trickster behind this one-man show at Le Soufflé, telling us about social responsibility without being preachy, laughing with us without being ridiculous, and secretly fighting with us in the struggle that is the circus of our life. He helps us narrate our stories, too.

"The Circus of Life" opens on June 14. Call 8990718.

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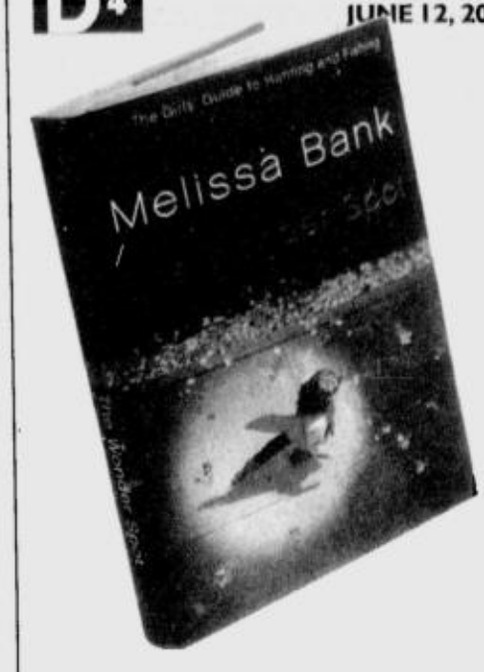


Book club's readings for June

MELISSA BANK, AUTHOR OF THE mega-bestseller "A Girls Guide to Hunting and Fishing," returns with another engaging read in "The Wonder Spot." The book's heroine, Sophie Applebaum, is the central figure of a Jewish family living in Surrey, Pennsylvania. The book is a comic and a refreshingly honest look at the family's life cycle and a young woman's journey into adulthood.

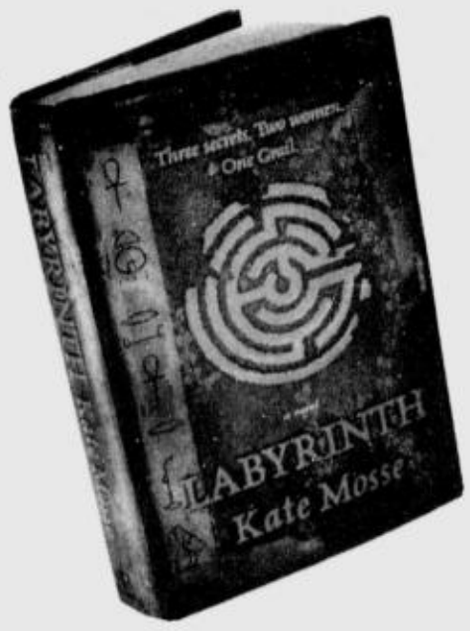
"Labyrinth" by Kate Mosse introduces two female protagonists born 800 years apart but are similarly tasked to protect the true Grail's secret against villains out to use it for their selfish gain. Year 2005, archaeological dig volunteer Alice discovers a secret cave with strange writings on the wall, the pattern of a labyrinth, and two crumbling skeletons, between these are a stone ring and a small leather bag.

Flashback to year 1209, Alais' father entrusts her a book and a ring on the eve he leaves to join a brutal battle against the Crusades. The book is part of the secret trilogy connected to the Grail and inscribed in the ring is a labyrinth pointing to its guardian.

PowerBook Club discussions for "The Wonder Spot" will be held in PowerBooks Greenbelt on June 27, 6:30 p.m., and on June 30, 6:30 p.m., in PowerBooks Megamall for "Labyrinth."

The Power Book Club is open to everyone. People may register at the customer service counter of any PowerBooks branch and get 10-percent off the featured book. Powercard Plus holders who sign up get 20-percent off. Plus, the first 16 registrants get a free cup of coffee from The Java Man.

PowerBooks Specialty Store has branches at Greenbelt 4 (tel. 7576428 to 29), SM Megamall (6352898 to 99), Alabang Town Center (8505662 to 63), Glorietta (7527075), Shangri-La (6380023/25), Robinsons Place Ermita (5233334, 5243448) and SM Mall of Asia (5560244).



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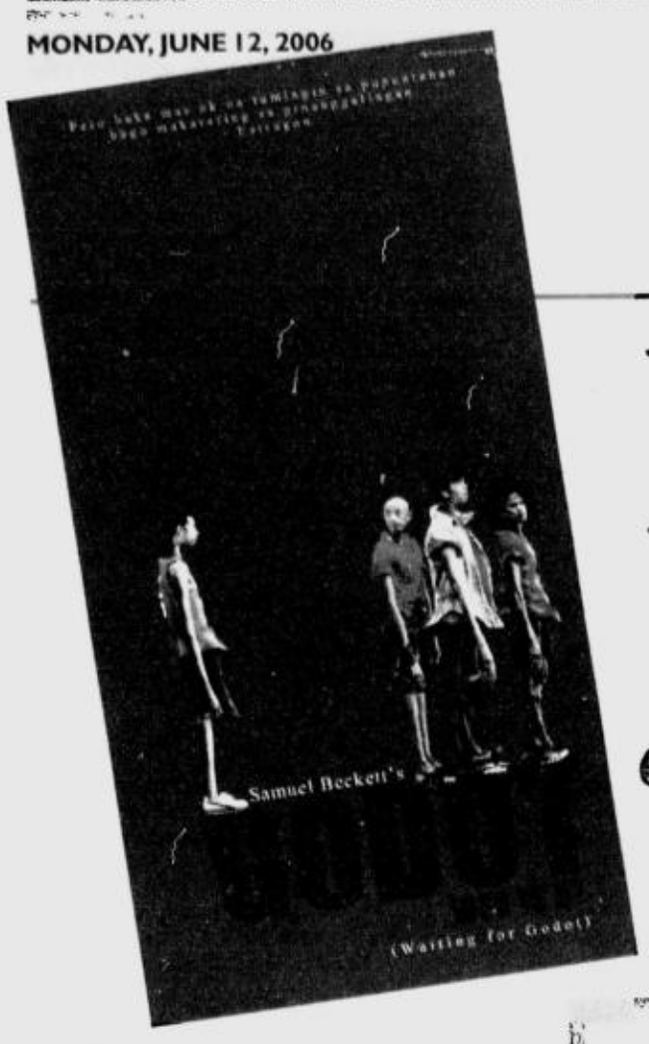


Hope along 'da riles'

Samuel Beckett's 'Waiting for Godot' is universally seen as an absurdist play. French director Alain Timar, here to do a local version, begs to disagree

By Gibbs Cadiz

THIS YEAR MARKS THE birth centenary of Samuel Beckett, the protean Irish playwright, novelist, poet, critic and Nobel laureate whose bleak worldview and radical art, expressed in seminal dramas like "Waiting for Godot," "Endgame" and "Happy Days," helped redefine theater in the modern era.

Visiting French director Alain Timar is well aware of the global hubbub surrounding Beckett's 100th year, but he has a more emotional reason for mounting a local production of "Waiting for Godot," which starts its run on June 22 at the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

"Last year I came to Manila," he says, "and I was really impressed to see very poor people living side by side with very rich people. While riding a taxi, I saw these shanties along the railroad, only a short distance away from Makati! This is impossible to see in Europe."

So fascinated was Timar that he visited one such area ("this place between Makati and Malate," he says, referring apparently to San Andres Bukid). "They were very kind, very gentle, not aggressive at all. I wasn't naive, I knew the situation could be dangerous, but for the most part they were very nice. And they were smiling all the time."

Artistic statement

What Timar had stumbled on was the uniquely Filipino brand of sunshiny resiliency against crushing odds. Rather incredibly, what came to his mind next was Beckett's masterpiece, which is often seen as the archetypal artistic statement on the futility and irrationality of life.

In Beckett's play, two tramps named Vladimir and Estragon wait for a certain person named Godot—who may or may not come, and whose business with the two is never made clear. They bicker, banter with and amuse each other to while away the time. The play ends without Godot ever making an appearance, but Vladimir and Estragon, it is implied, will continue to wait.

Timar, the artistic director of Theatre des Halles in Avignon, France, and an artist who enjoys a "nontraditional" reputation, thought the play could be transposed to the local setting, with the two men becoming derelicts living by the rail tracks. But to be true to what he saw during his visit, it would not be a treatise on pointlessness, but on how hope survives even in such miserable surroundings.

"'Waiting for Godot' is usually called an absurd play," he says, "and that's the traditional, academic, philosophical view. But I saw how it could work in the local version, with these people living by the rails."

"The rails"—he brandishes a sketch of Gino Gonzales' planned set design showing a short span of *riles* bissecting the stage—"have a symbolic significance. They come from nothing and go into nothing. They are a symbol of infinity, of travel. They are a way for these people to leave their poverty behind. They can be a symbol for happiness."

"I think that waiting is a form of hoping," he says.

"And 'Godot' is absolutely not absurd," he argues. "'Absurd' is an invention of teachers and academics. 'Absurd' is when you step back and put some distance between you and the material. I met Beckett twice, and I think that, for him, 'Godot' represented the condition of life. Everyday we work, we live, we love, and then we die. We hope for something else, but we continue to live."

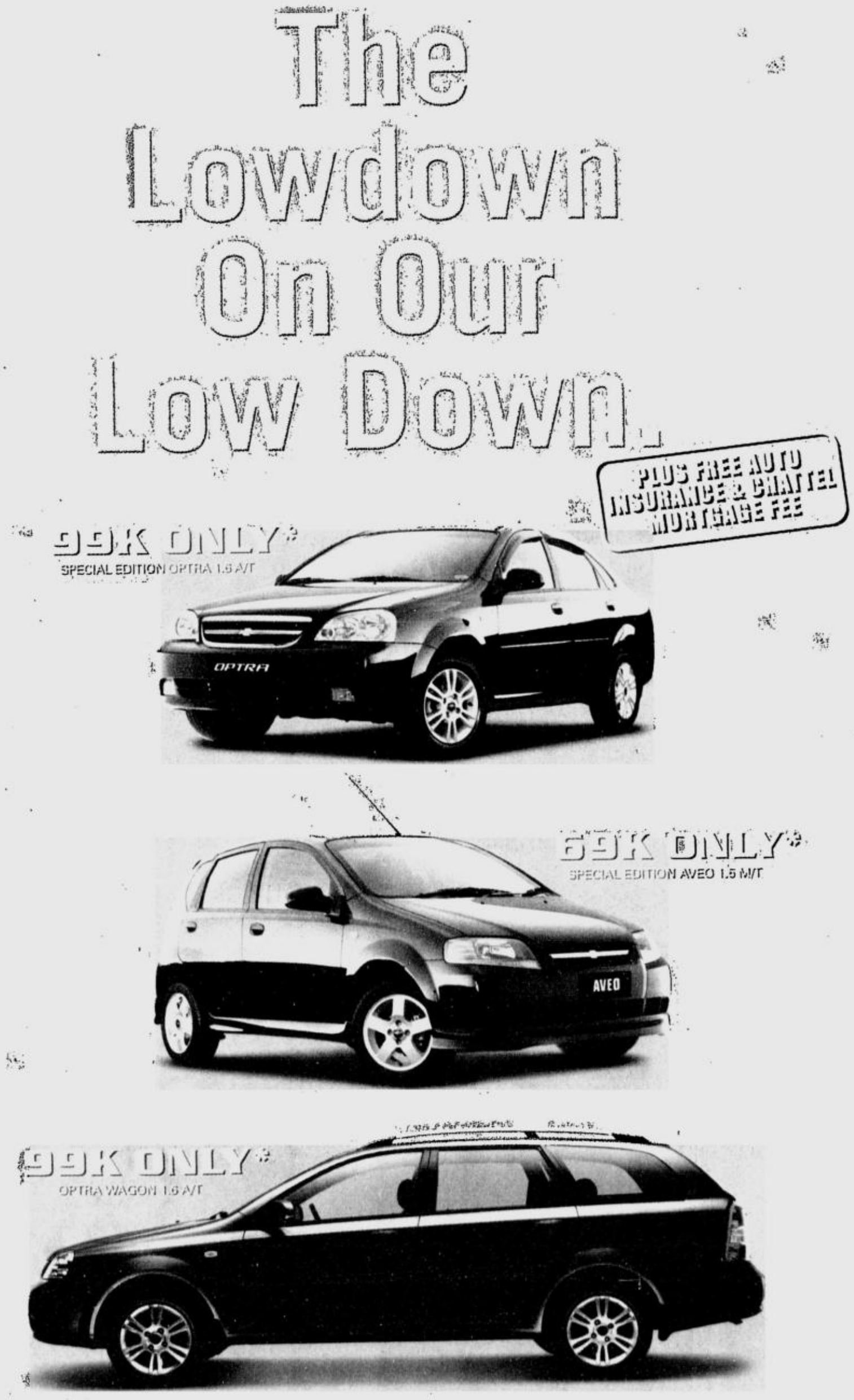
Optimists would see that as purposefulness, pessimists as meaninglessness. Timar is firmly on the upbeat side.

"'Godot' is not about nonsense. Yes, these people are poor, the lowest class, but they are a symbol of positive humanity, too. The situation is really hard, but they're human, too—perhaps more human than the rest of society. I am inspired by that, that's why I tell my actors, 'Smile, please.' Life is hard, but smiling is beautiful."

Manila atmosphere

Other than the open, welcoming faces he saw among the city's destitute which he now wants to bring to the stage, Timar is also

HOPE/ E2



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Aveo Special Ed. 1.5 M/T	635,000	69,000	50,392	34,530	26,777	19,056	15,266	13,302	7,610
Aveo Special Ed. 1.5 A/T	675,000	79,000	53,062	36,361	28,196	20,066	16,075	14,007	8,089
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The loneliness of Filipino artists

By Pablo A. Tariman
Contributor

TONIGHT, AT 7:30 P.M. AT the Shangri-La Plaza Cinema, Raya Martin's "Indio Nacionale (O Ang Mahabang Kalungkutan ng Katagalugan)," a 96-minute film revolving around the common man during the colonial times, will be shown. I am inclined to translate this as "The Loneliness of the Colonized Filipino Then and Now."

I suppose it is a very fitting film for reflecting on the birth of the nation and how the Filipinos have struggled across the centuries.

Martin is a young artist with a unique sensibility. He exemplifies the work of young artists who do their best to project the best that this country can offer. As we celebrate the country's Independence Day today, it is imperative that we watch the best that this country has nurtured so as to encourage them to go on despite the hopelessness we all feel in the political front.

After watching Martin's film, I suggest we all get in touch with the country's stable of young prizewinners in the field of music.

Oliver Salonga

On Sunday, June 25, young pianist Oliver Salonga—two-time first prize winner of the National Music Competition for Young Artists (Namcya) and winner of two concerto competitions in Florida, US—will be heard in a solo recital at the Philamlife Theater.

What is unique about Salonga is that he perseveres regardless of the uncertainties facing artists in classical music.

Cecile Licad herself has been very impressed with Salonga. She has coached him and advised him to go on even if the chances of making a lucrative living out of music is uncertain.

Many times in the past, I get calls from frantic parents asking me if their children had made the right choice by pursuing music. I told them to respect the choice, but I made it clear they might not recover all the investments (expenses for endless music lessons, master classes, air tickets for scholarship abroad, board and lodging, etc.) they made for such a career choice.

Our young musicians will get standing ovations when they end up the best in their batch, but it doesn't mean they will get priority for assistance from government institutions or they will get corporate sponsorship once they start their concertizing.

Filmmakers should do a film called "The Loneliness of the Long-Distance Filipino Artist," which would zero in on what Filipino artists go through just to heed the call of their art.

I take note of the frantic appeal for help made by violin prodigy Chino Gutierrez, who's doing well in Germany as a full scholar, but is hampered by monthly expenses beyond his parents' means.

Girard Moises Villanueva

Last week, another music scholar, clarinet player Girard Moses Villanueva, graduated magna cum laude from the Conservatory of Music of Lynn University in Florida, US, but couldn't go home due to the high cost of air tickets.

When Girard qualified for scholarship four years ago, his parents borrowed money for his air ticket as there were no funds from state institutions such as the NCCA, which he had approached first.

For four years, he didn't take a vacation for the obvious reason—he could not afford the air ticket. The school has in fact offered him another scholarship for a graduate degree but he wants to come home first and do a concert.

But going home means spending quite a sum for air ticket from Miami to Manila.

Gifted young artists should be able to turn to their government for help. But knowing how the bureaucracy works in this country (artists are often advised to get a foundation to sponsor them when they ask for help at the NCCA), it is most likely that artists will chart a career path where they don't have to beg for support.

A prize-winning Filipino tenor and a violinist have turned to computer jobs as music couldn't obviously support their family.

Another prize-winning pianist shifted to medicine and a soprano has turned to law, knowing that music would not get her anywhere.

In that light, I cheer the latest batch of Filipino artists who were inducted into the Order of National Artists Awards by Malacañang.

Their untold stories will make for another film called "The Loneliness of National Artists."

For concert inquiries, call 9007023 or 0906-5104270.

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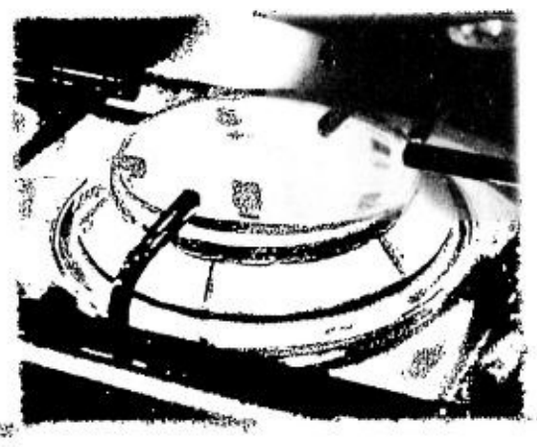

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Hope along 'da riles'

From page E1

aware of the peculiar requirements of translating Beckett to local culture.

"Our target is to approach Filipino culture and not to translate Western culture into a local stage. We have to live in Filipino culture, to adapt to the Manila atmosphere," he says.

So his homework has included finding the local equivalent of Estragon's favorite food—carrots, turnips, radish. Now it's Sky Flakes, Blue Skies, Fita. Where Beckett spoke of some plush places in the Pyrenees, now it's Makati or Boracay. And "Waiting for Godot" is now retitled "Godot, Wer Is U?"

The actors Timar has chosen—Paolo O'Hara, Bong Cabrera, Cris Pasturan and Paolo Rodriguez—are no slouches in playing materially bereft characters. O'Hara and Rodriguez were part of Loy Arcenas' "Ang Romansa ni Magno Rubio" in 2004, about Filipino migrants in the dust bowls of 1930s America. Cabrera and Pasturan alternated as the rapping Mercutio in Tanghalang Pilipino's genre-bending, *jologs*-celebrating "R'meo Luvs Dew-lhiett" last year. And Rodriguez slugged it out with Mario O'Hara and Irma Adlawan in another poverty-soaked TP play, Hanoch Levin's "Ang Pokpok ng Ohio."

Timar himself does not speak Filipino, but he has devised an ingenious way of directing these actors. His script comes in three versions: French, English and Filipino. Every single line is numbered, so he knows exactly where the actors are at a given point. With the help of a couple of assistants who guide him on the Filipino translation (by George de Jesus III), "I hear the music of the lines, and I can understand every word. That's how I also direct the lines," he explains.

"Everyday, we're seeing that Beckett's writing is very close to the local version. We have a very strong connection between the play and the realistic situation of this people. In this way, we can say that Beckett is really universal," he adds.

As Timar describes it, the process is a constant dialogue between two cultures—his French background and the local context. This "Godot" will not be a philosophical or existentialist version but an earthbound, sensitive one reflecting marginalization and survival in Filipino society.

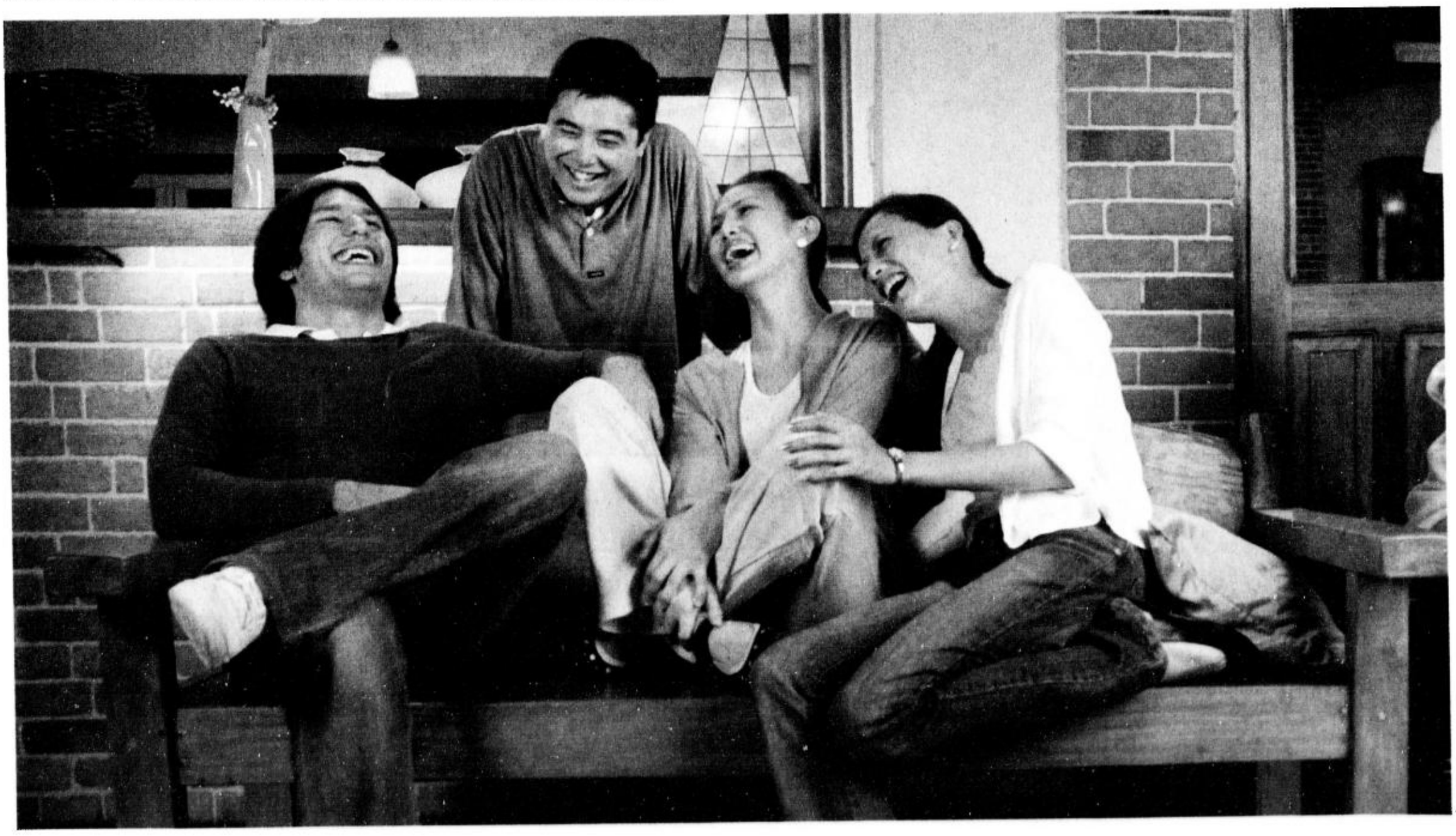
SAMUEL Beckett, 1906-1989. Oil on canvas by Barrie Maguire

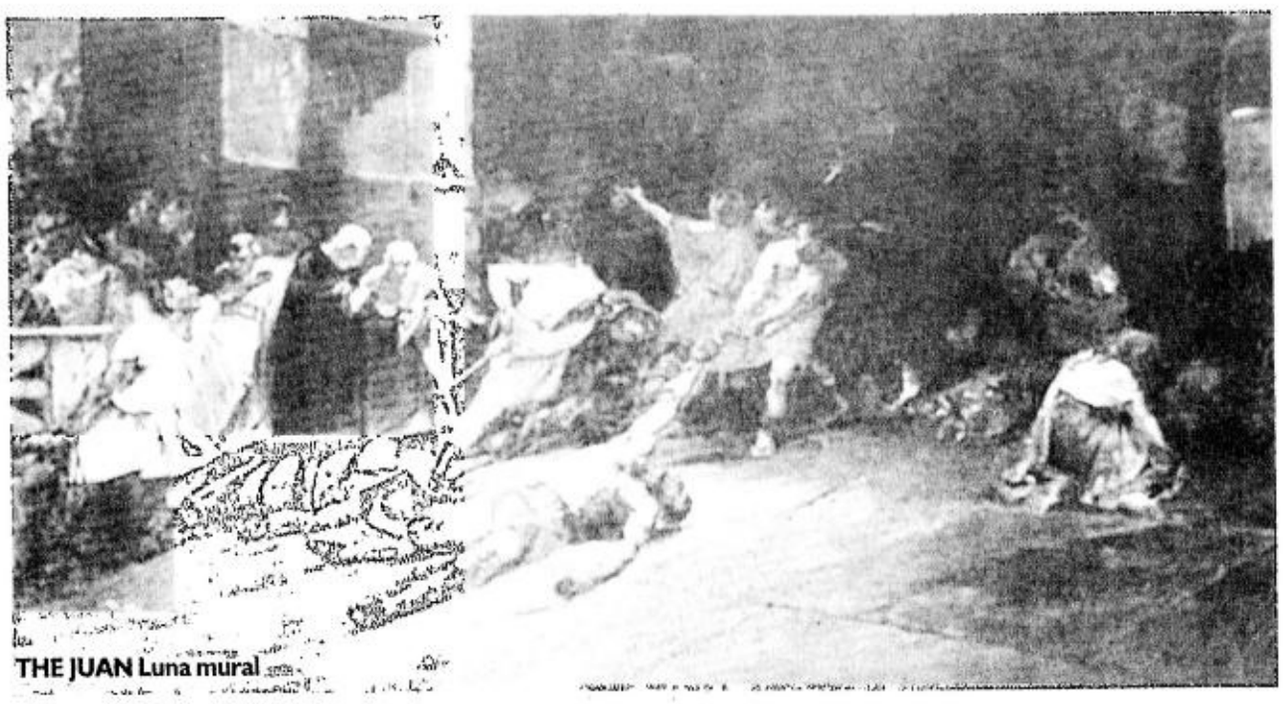
ARTWORK COURTESY OF WWW.MAGUIREGALLERY.COM

"I tell my actors, look around you. Pick the attitudes, find the realistic relationships between the stage and real life. You are the lawyers for these people. Show their real humanity."

"Godot, Wer Is U?" runs June 22-25 at the CCP as part of the International Theater Festival 2006, and Sept. 8-Oct. 1 as part of Tanghalang Pilipino's 20th theater season. Call 8323661/8321125 locals 1620-21/0920-9535381/0920-9535419/8919999. E-mail ccptanghalan@yahoo.com

E-mail the author at gcadiz@inquirer.com.ph




THE JUAN Luna mural

SOPRANO Ana Feleo

TENOR Eladio Pamaran

'Spoliarium': A Filipino tragedy

By Amadis Ma. Guerrero
Contributor

A FEW MONTHS AGO, I WAS ARGUing with a friend, for the sake of argument, over the opera "Spoliarium: Juan Luna," by composer Ryan Cayabyab and librettist Fides Cuyugan-Asensio, the diva.

"Since this is a Filipino opera, the language should be Filipino," I said. "But the Lunas and the Pardo de Taveras did not speak in Tagalog," countered my friend. "That's right," I conceded. "They were *ilustrados*, so for realism the libretto should be in Spanish (Castellano)."

On second thought, I said to myself, that's asking too much. Realism is not that really important in an opera. Asensio's libretto in English will do. After all, in the Gounod opera, Carmen the Spanish vixen was belting it out in French.

"Spoliarium: Juan Luna" was restaged recently at the National Gallery of Art, National Museum, for the benefit of the Museum Foundation of the Philippines. With President Macapagal-Arroyo around, it was a media event. Well, almost.

Not ideal site

The venue, Ablaza Hall, is not an ideal site for an opera; there is hardly any room for props and a set. But this was compensated for that evening by the backdrop, the Luna masterpiece itself, "Spoliarium," etched in blood-red colors by the lightning design of Shoko Matsumoto.

LIBRETTIST Fides Cuyugan-Asensio

There are only a few lyrical passages in the music by Cayabyab. You don't go home humming any of the arias, as you would, say, hum "Musetta's Waltz" after watching "La Boheme." The music leans more toward "heavy, dramatic Wagner" rather than "melodic Puccini." This is as it should be, I guess, considering the work's somber theme.

The libretto by Asensio captures the spirit and sentiments of the two protagonists (antagonists), as tension mounts.

The opera is as demanding actingwise as it is musically (with all those high notes), and director Alexander Cortez has elicited powerful performances from tenor Eladio Pamaran (as Luna) and soprano Ana Feleo (as his battered wife Paz). Asensio herself is a fiery Doña Juliana, the mother indignant at the abuse her daughter is enduring.

The final scenes tug at the heart, like watching a Shakespearean tragedy, with two bodies on the stage and a remorseful hero (or antihero). The Luna son, Luling (child actor Paul Sagano), enters and cautions the audience to be quiet, as "abuelita" (grandma) is sleeping."

Magic realism is present at the coda, as Luna is handed a palette and a brush by his son and dead wife, meaning that life and art have to go on.

"Spoliarium: Juan Luna" is a welcome addition to the sparse field that is Philippine opera. It should continue to be restaged.

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Dr. Lenora Fernandez, Clinical Associate Professor at the Department of Medicine at the UP College of Medicine, welcomes the arrival of Nicorette in the country. "The availability of a pharmacological treatment like the Nicorette gum will further boost the country's smoking cessation programs. The use of Nicorette along with a stop smoking program will definitely increase success rates of those who want to quit smoking." And Dr. Fernandez should know. She is also the Consultant Coordinator of Philippine General Hospital's Comprehensive Ambulatory Respiratory (CARE) Program and Stop Smoking Program.

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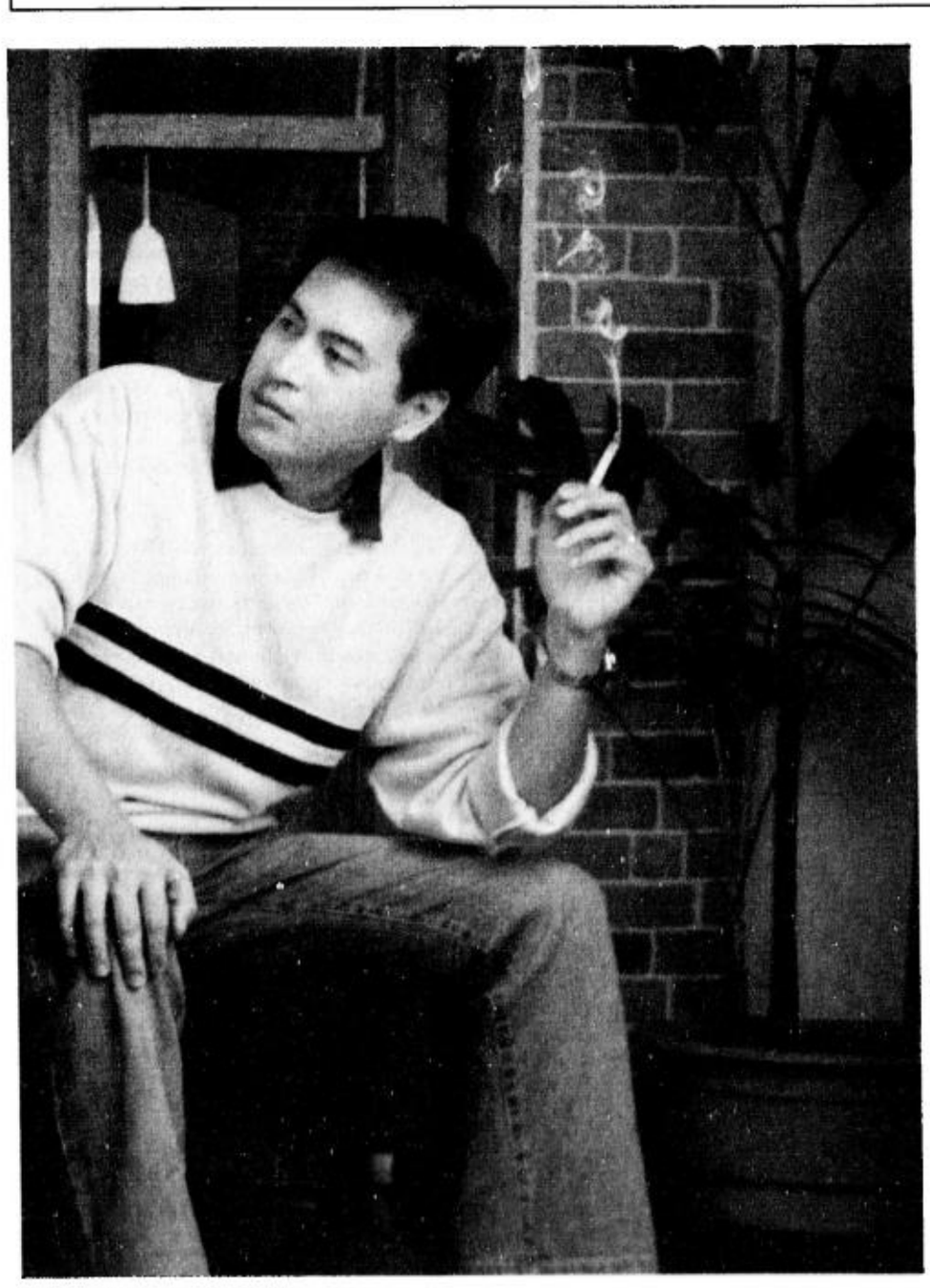

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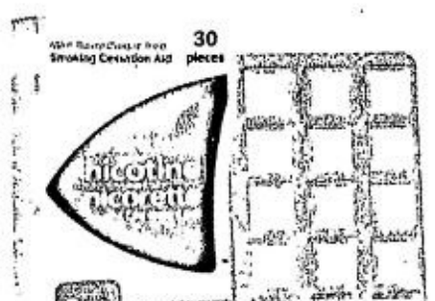

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TOP WRITERS (second row) Anthony Tan, Marjorie Evasco, National Artist Edith Tiempo, Susan Lara, DM Reyes, and Ian Rosales Casocot. Standing: fellows Andrea Teran, Ana Escalante Neri, Erin Cabanawan, Larissa Suarez, Michellan Sarile and Patricia Evangelista. Front row: fellows Ino Habana, Douglas Candano, Dwight Chiong and Dominique Cimafranca

THE FELLOWS getting chummy with National Artist Edith Tiempo and poet Cesar Ruiz Aquino.

Feeling sovereign in Dumaguete

By Ana Escalante Neri
Contributor

Asia's longest writing workshop has just closed its 45th chapter

IT IS OVER, ALL THREE WEEKS OF THE 45th National Writer's Workshop held in Dumaguete last May 8-26, yet these ears can still hear the soft voice of Dr. Edith L. Tiempo, National Artist for Literature, telling us 11 writing fellows that "with literature, we become more human." We could all only nod then, stricken mute by the pronouncement of the word-lover's fate, for how much more of being human—reckless, stupid, sad, fragile, happy—could one really take?

At 9 a.m.-12 noon and 3-5 p.m. every day, Monday-Friday, we fellows—Ino Habana, Douglas Candano, Erin Cabanawan, Larissa Suarez, Dominique Cimafranca, Darwin Chiong, Michellan Sarile, Andrea Tan, Patricia Evangelist and Dr. Noel Pingoy, and myself—sat in a room overlooking the Rizal Boulevard, our avocado-green softbound workshop manuscripts pared open into a page of poetry, or fiction, or essay. For those of us given to daydreaming, sighing at a window full of sea, quotables from Dr. Tiempo, our "Mom," were quick to reel us back to the urgent task of the moment—that of apprehending the errant sentence, of making taut the flabby line, of, in the end, discerning good from bad literature.

As for our weekly panel of critics, they awed us beyond our abilities to verbalize our gratitude. Professor Marjorie Evasco always gave astute interpretations of even our most poorly executed poems. So did professor Sawi Aquino, poets Anthony Tan and DM Reyes, and fictionist Susan Lara, who gave as much encouragement as they did wake-up calls to the careless writer. And no matter how harsh the criticism from the panelists, we learned to take them without flinching. Even Mom Edith herself said: "It takes a destruction to make something new."

Flaming trunks

Taking their place at the critics' table during the second week were Dr. Jimmy Abad, whose passion for the well-written story had him jumping off his seat crying out "Masterful!" and "You've got it, son-of-a-gun," and Krip Yuson, who endeared himself to the fellows with the wholesome charm of the rare, true gentleman, together with his pair of flaming swimming trunks.

Finally, the kindest of the panelists, ushered in on the third week, was Bobby Villasis, who must have given his best critique outside the conference room, over free bottles of vodka, rum and beer.

Through the weeks, we did our job as well as we could turn away momentarily from the seduction of the city's streets, "pedie-wedies," cafés and local fare while sessions were in progress. Within the conference room, we pored over each other's works, nit-picked on embarrassing grammatical lapses, praised certain sensibilities. Then, freed under the Dumaguete skies, we shared vitamins, ziggies and hangovers.

Somewhere in between, we told each other the stories and poems we dared not write just yet, all the while feeling vulnerable in our happiness, aware of each moment's impermanence. Usually accustomed to solitude, we found pleasure in the company of kindred souls, clinging to each other (for balance after a round of whiskey, or not to fall again in the gutter when dancing in the rain) on Wednesday reggae nights at Hayahay.

After reading Stephen Dunn, we spent our hearts, ignoring warnings of sentimentalism and a lesson on Ruskin's pathetic fallacy: we still liked to believe, and believe with a petulance, that the sky shed tears for us, at least while we felt a keen collective ache from the dwindling summer days we weren't yet prepared for…

The panelists had spoken to us of the poet Cirilio Bautista's "three sovereignties" in poetry—the sovereignty of the author, the reader and the poem, each with its own dominion, its own power. Clearly, the 45th National Writer's Workshop has its three sovereignties, too—literature, the fellowship and the city of Dumaguete.

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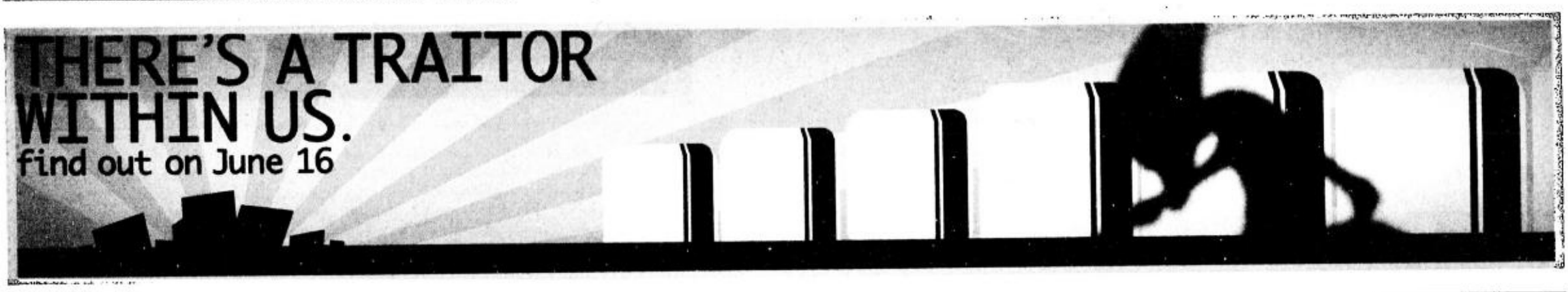

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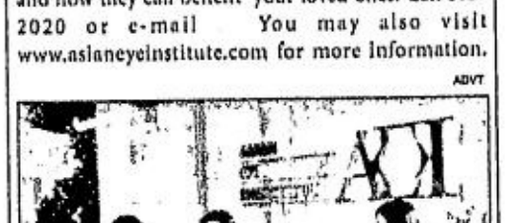

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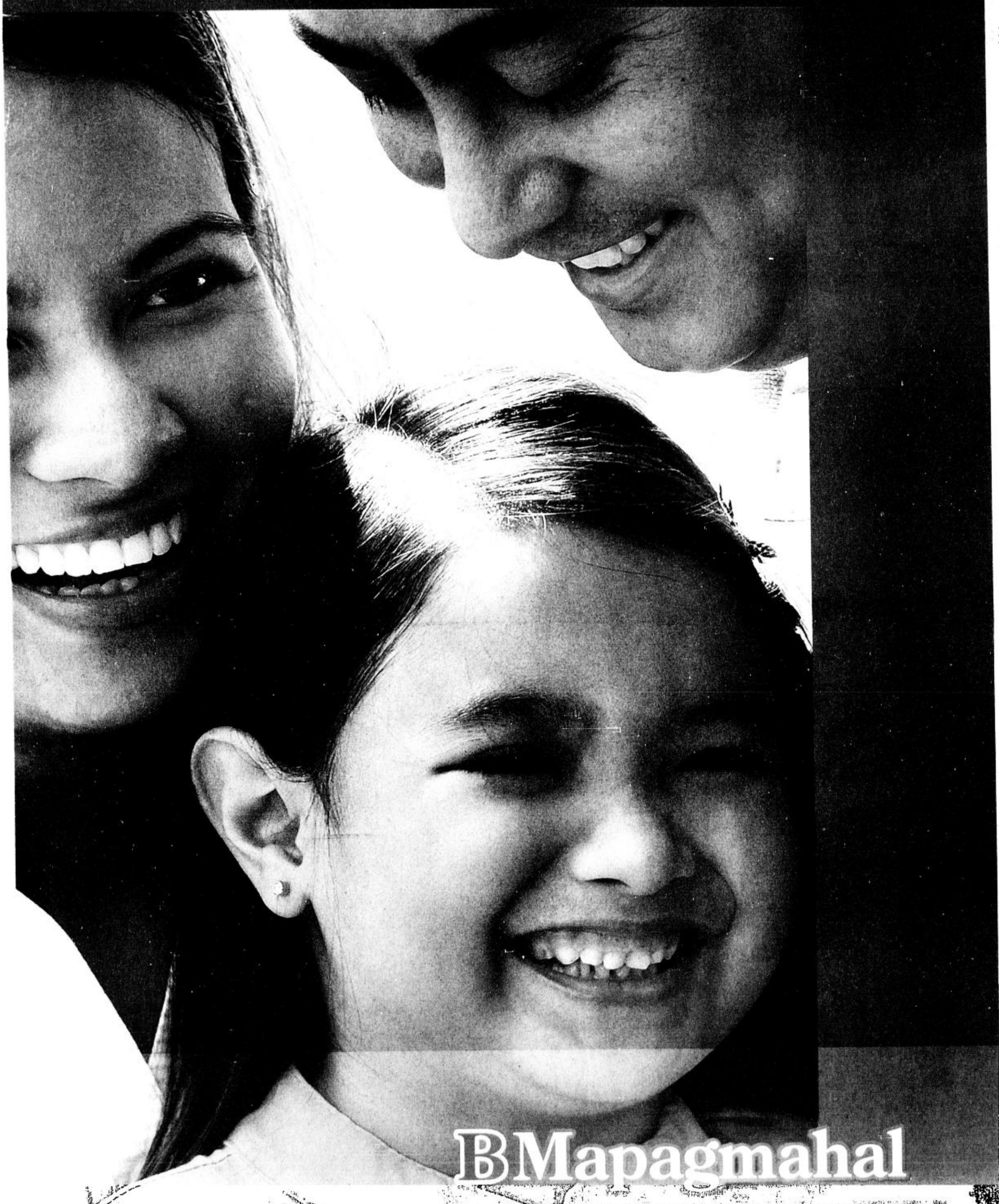

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And to everyone you hold close to your heart. Dahil para sa kanila
ang iyong pagsisikap.

Never forget where you came from. Alalahanin mo ang iyong
pagkatao and lahi mo. Dahil ikaw ay Pilipino
at ipagmamalaki ng mundo.

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In everything you do,
ibuhos mo ang lahat.
Makipagsabayan sa mga
manggagawa ng buong
mundo. At ipakita mo
ang galing ng Pilipino.
Magsilbing halimbawa,
na ang may tiyaga,
umaasenso.

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Dahil ang ating kinikita,
dapat may pupuntahan.
Para sa pamilya na ating
sinusuportahan.
At para sa ating bayan na
gusto nating matulungan.
Because we are building
the Filipino dream.
Simulan mo ngayon, para
maiuwi mo ang pangarap.

Para sa Expat Pinoy,
ito ang payo ng inyong bangko.
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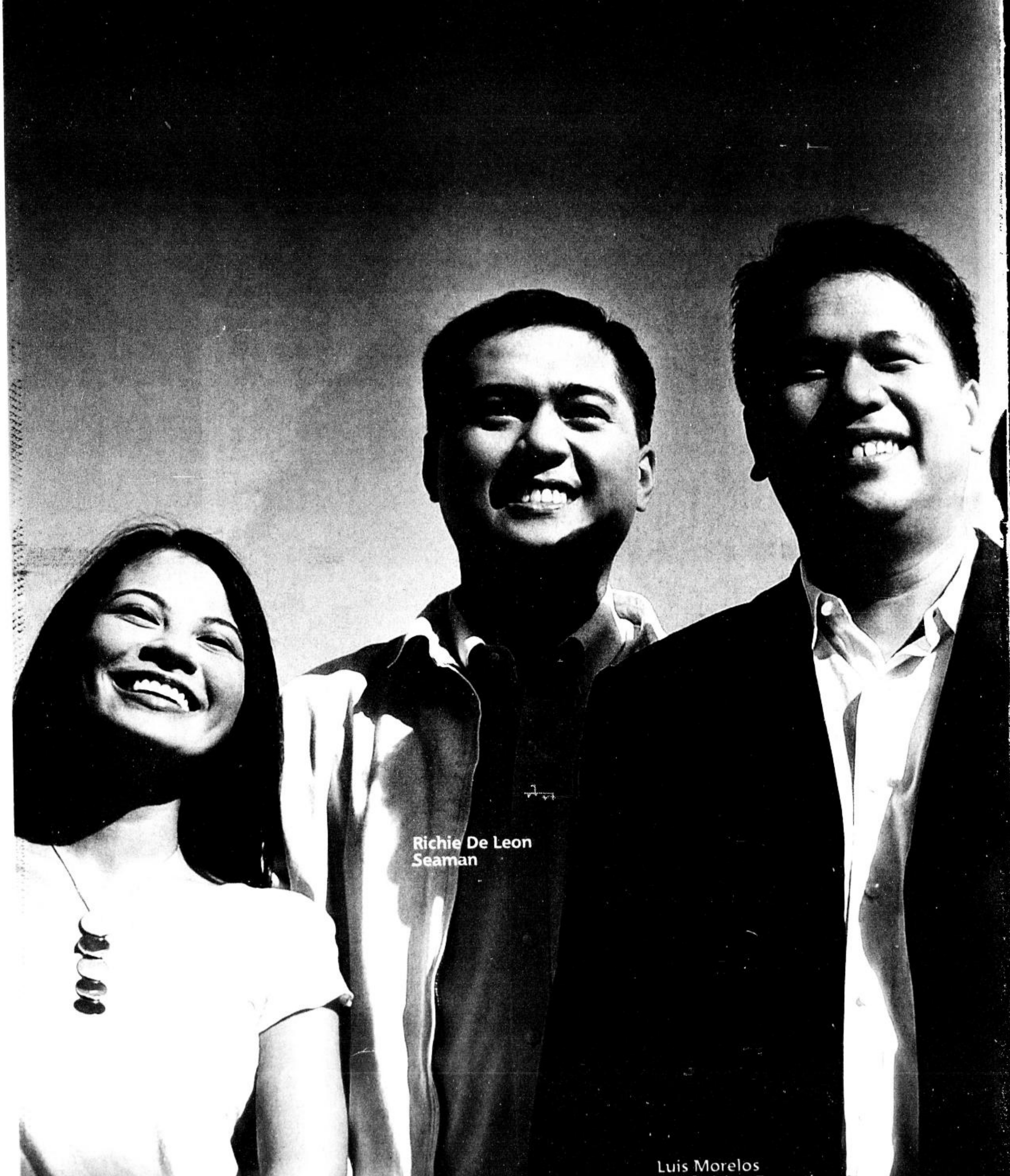

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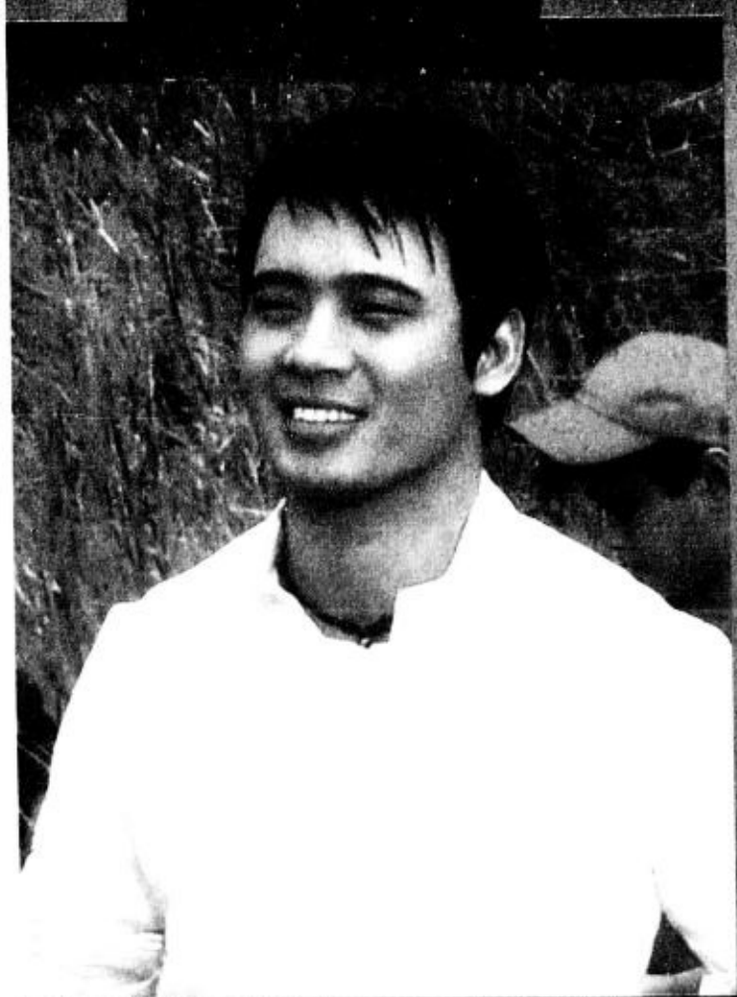
Gusto niyang maging doctor paglaki.

Renz Michael Valerio
7 years old
Grade 2 student sa Antipolo Faith Christian School
Favorite ng kanyang ate, isang accountant sa Abu-Dhabi na nagpapadala ng pera sa kanilang mga magulang, para makatulong sa mga pangangailangan ni Renz. Paglaki ni Renz, gusto niya maging engineer.

Joyce Giselle Ching
11 years old
Grade 6 sa Montessori De San Ildefonso
Anak ng isang seaman. Mabait at maganda, pangarap ni Joyce maging artista or newscaster paglaki.



Making his television commercial debut is 23-year old Erik Santos, one of the fastest rising singing sensations of the country.

Erik's father, an engineer in the Middle East, sacrificed not being with his family for many years to be able to provide for them. Though miles away, his Expat Pinoy father was a great inspiration when he joined a singing contest where he emerged the champion.

Aside from starring in the commercial, Erik also joins in singing the anthem for the TV spot. The song "Iuwi Mo ang Pangarap" expresses what every child of an Expat Pinoy feels. The words of the song ring true because it speaks of these children's collective wish -- to have their parents come home. These children truly understand the plight of their parents, and they are all grateful for the sacrifices their parents have endured for them.

UMALIS
BUMALIK
SA IYO NANABIK
AT SA PAG-ASANG DALA
SA IYONG PAGBABALIK

IUWI MO ANG PANGARAP
KASAMA NG HALIK AT YAKAP
SA PUSO KO IKAW ANG HANAP
IUWI MO ANG PANGARAP

MAWALAY MAN
IKAW ANG NASA ISIPAN
PAGMAMAHAL NA
IPINADAMA MO
KATUWANG AY PANGAKO
NA NASA PUSO

IUWI MO ANG PANGARAP
PAGMAMAHAL AT PAGLINGAP
IKAW ANG HANAP-HANAP
IUWI MO ANG PANGARAP

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KASAMA NG HALIK AT YAKAP
SA PUSO KO IKAW ANG HANAP
IUWI MO, IUWI MO
IUWI MO ANG PANGARAP

See these children sing and pay tribute to the Expat Pinoys here and all over the world. Watch the BPI Direct Savings Bank commercial that airs today at ABS-CBN, GMA 7, Studio 23, ANC, Cinema One, The Lifestyle Network, RPN 9, Solar Sports, ETC, and worldwide through The Filipino Channel.

BPI DIRECT
Savings Bank
www.bpidirect.com
A wholly-owned subsidiary of the
BANK OF THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS

World Slasher Cup II:

The Olympics of Cockfighting

The friendly competition that was first started in 1963 has evolved into what is now "a must-see event" for tourists visiting the country, as endorsed by the Department of Tourism, headed by Sec. Ace Durano.

Through the years, the World Slasher Cup has provided a stage in which only the best and the finest compete. The will to win the coveted World Slasher Cup compelled the Filipino cockfighting barons to a wild race for the best and most prolific fighters and rooster-raisers of America in those days.

The steady stream of American pitmasters brought to our shores by the likes of highly revered Pinoy cocking greats DO Plaza, AP Reyes, Don Peping Lanuza, James Chiongbian, Ramon Mitra, Don Ricardo Silverio, the Lacsons of Bacolod; the Yulos and Montinolas of Negros and the Cojuangcos of Tarlac have created a healthy interaction between local cockers and their western sporting brothers.

The breeds and strains of roosters brought by the Americans competing in the World Slasher Cup provided the needed infusion of bloodlines that improved our local stocks, thereby making the sport more competitive. These include the roosters of world cocking legends Duke Hulsey, Joe Goode, Billy Abbot, Heinie Mathesius, Oscar Aikins, Billy Ruble, Dee Cox, Richard Bates, Dan Gray, Carol Nesmith, Ray Alexander Bob Howard, Tom Wilson, Wayne Haulmark, Col. Givens, Gary Guillam and Bruce Barnett among many others.

About four years ago when the Bureau of Animal Industry eased the importation of gamefowls from the United States, Filipino cockers from all walks of life for the first time gained access to quality broodstocks from America. This development resulted in a new direction for the World Slasher Cup.

Convinced they finally had the winning edge, more and more Fil-Ams, foreign-based cockers and local breeders who had acquired breeding stocks from their US-based friends and relatives, had been competing and making waves in the World Slasher Cup. This also resulted from an average of 60 entries per staging to a huge increase of 100 to 150 participants since 2004.

The glamour attached to the World Slasher Cup today has attracted not only cockers from the United States, but also from other countries as well. Over time, the event has developed into a homecoming of sorts for thousands of Pinoy *sabungeros* who have acquired other citizenships or are based abroad.

Jorge "Nene" Araneta (Thunderbird entry)—owner of the Araneta Coliseum where the World Slasher Cup was born and has been staged through the years, has propelled and led the continuous staging of the World Slasher Cup.

The biggest cockfighting event in the world starts tomorrow (June 13, and 15, 17) at Araneta Coliseum 'The Mecca of Philippine sports and entertainment'

THUNDERBIRD® and the World Slasher Cup

Inseparable tandem for Philippine cockfighting

THE WORLD SLASHER Cup 8-Cock Invitational Derby reverberates again at the Araneta Coliseum with its 43rd edition on June 13, 15 and 17, bringing the best and finest pit fighters and gamefowl breeders in the world to what has been regarded as the "Olympics of Cockfighting". Through the years, the Big Dome, with its owner Jorge "Nene" Araneta and recently with the Pintakasi of Champions, has made it its commitment to stage the semi-annual event to showcase the league's most excellent breed of gamebirds of the time and present to the Pinoy *sabungero* the most prestigious and competitive derby in the world.

Working side by side with the World Slasher Cup in this endeavor is Thunderbird Power Feeds—the undisputed gamefowl industry leader. Over the years, Thunderbird Power Feeds has provided valuable support and has worked hand-in-hand with the organizers of the World Slasher Cup in a united effort to make every event bigger and better.

From the get-go, Thunderbird Power Feeds had only one thing in mind: to take the Pinoy spirit to the world. It is the battlecry since it supported the staging of the World Slasher Cup. Such an undertaking was launched primarily to put the Philippines in the map of gamebirds sports and instill pride and belief in every Filipino that we are capable of achieving a world-class feat, the value of which is the combination of good breeding, time spent in training and preparation and constant response to the trials and tests.

For the first time in the Philippines, *sabong* aficionados will experience a totally different atmosphere in cockfighting. Inside the Big Dome, Thunderbird will provide a giant electronic scoreboard and giant screens showing the ringside view of the on-going hackfights with slow-motion replays of the winning moments of the prized gamebird (as seen in basketball and boxing matches).

Aside from these technical innovations, Thunderbird Power Feeds will also feature a festive ambience inside and out the arena, breaktime entertainment, games and WOW Magic Sing-along with prizes and product giveaways awaiting *sabong* enthusiasts.

The 2006 edition of the World Slasher Cup II with the support of Thunderbird Power Feeds promises to be another record-breaking and historic event as a legacy to the sport and gamefowl breeding industry of the "inseparable tandem for Philippine cockfighting".

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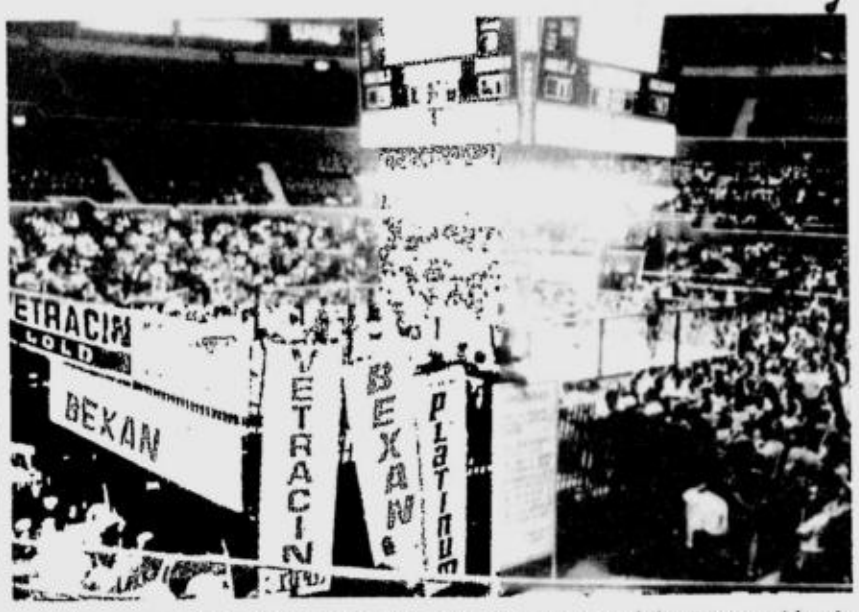
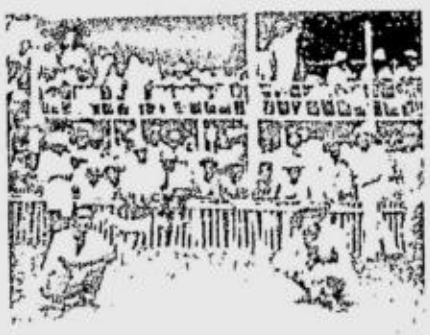
THUNDERBIRD POWER FEEDS

The company that nurtured an industry

There were a few companies who caught a glimpse of hope in the cockfighting and gamefowl breeding industry, but it was Univet Agricultural Products Inc's Sarmanok Feeds of the Unilab Group of Companies, that not only saw clearly the light at the end of the tunnel, but was able to fully visualize what lay far, far beyond.





The first product Thunderbird Hi-Protein Power Pellets was launched in 1988, backed by a marketing drive that surprised the country's *sabungeros*. The faith and determination displayed by the company generated the pride, inspiration and encouragement for hundreds of thousands of Filipinos to jump into the sport of cockfighting and the gamefowl breeding industry that has been a Filipino custom even before Magellan came to our shores. The rest was history.

Other specialized feeds for gamefowl were formulated and produced and eventually, the Thunderbird Power Feeds division was established. With Thunderbird's intensive education of rooster-raisers through brochures, journals, seminars, radio and television programs, the Filipino cocker was transformed from the figure of a man blowing cigar smoke on his rooster to an executive checking the vaccination program of his birds on his laptop.

With Thunderbird product commercials seen on primetime television and its sponsorship of monumental sporting events such as Manny Pacquiao's domination of Mexican boxers, the public has accorded the sport considerable acceptance, honor and respect, thereby giving the *sabungerong* Pinoy a sense of pride of being a cocker.

Last year, Thunderbird celebrated its second Year of the Rooster in existence. Today, Thunderbird Power Feeds strongly remains as the undisputed market leader in the industry that it helped to develop and uplift.

Thunderbird Power Feeds: the company that nourished the gamefowl breeding industry and the sport of cockfighting.

JORGE 'Nene' Araneta known for his famous Thunderbird entry

Get up-to-date results of the World Slasher Cup II at Araneta Coliseum
www.sabungero.com/thunderbird/thunderbird.worldslasherupdates

Sabungero.com

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10. A BFAD representative will be present during the monthly and grand draws.
11. The 1st prize winners' store partner will get P5,000 worth of Thunderbird products in the monthly draws, and P10,000 worth of Thunderbird products in the grand draw.
12. Non-winning entries will automatically qualify for the final draw.
13. Winners will be called and/or notified via mail.
14. Promo starts March 1, 2006 and ends on June 30, 2006.

Individuals below 18 years old are not qualified to join.

Winners will be announced in Tukaan, Sundays, 12nn at IBC 13

Per DOH-BFAD Permit No. 0275 Series of 2006.

What you need to know about bird flu

By Ariel V. Macasaet, DVM

THE VIRUS. Bird flu is an infection caused by Influenza Type A virus characterized by two surface proteins, Hemagglutinins (HA) and Neuraminidase (NA) which provide basis for identification. To date, there are 15 HA and 9 NA subtypes of flu viruses, of which different combinations of HA and NA proteins are possible to create a distinct subtype. All subtypes of Influenza A viruses can be found in birds.

The current outbreak of bird flu that is sweeping across three continents (Asia, Europe and Africa) has been identified as H5N1 - the same strain of Influenza A virus which jumped the bird-human species barrier in Hong Kong in 1997.

The natural incubation period (time between infection and appearance of clinical signs) is 3 to 14 days and is dose-dependent.

OCCURRENCE. Bird flu is widespread in waterfowls such as geese, ducks, swans, gulls and terns. Wild birds carry the virus in their intestines but usually do not get sick. While this virus seldom causes clinical disease in wild birds, domestic poultry flocks are particularly vulnerable with mortality reaching up to 100 percent. Migratory birds are a significant source of infection especially in countries under major flyways. However, trade routes are also important means of spreading the virus.

THREAT TO LOCAL POULTRY/GAMEFOWL INDUSTRY. With the Philippines falling under the East Asian-Australian Flyway, a large migratory route along which millions of migratory birds fly for thousand of miles between New Zealand and Siberia, the threat of infection exists since migratory birds make a regular "stop-over" in some areas to rest and feed. Local free range chickens may come in contact with these migratory birds and serve as medium for the H5N1 virus to enter our food chain. The virus could then transfer from free-range chickens to poultry farms.

Some of the places where migratory birds regularly make a stop include the Manila Bay coastal area, Olango Island in Cebu, Candaba swamp in Pampanga, Batanes Island, Buguey Island in Cagayan Valley and the coastal wetlands of Mindanao.

CURRENT SITUATION. Bird flu outbreaks have spread like wildfire in recent months, spanning from Asia to Europe and Africa. Most of the recent outbreaks have been documented in Europe and Africa. Experts are also keeping an eye on wild bird population in Alaska—considered as a crossroad for migratory birds from Asia and Europe to America.

Based on the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) data, 52 countries have confirmed cases of H5N1 infection in humans and poultry/wild birds since the virus reappeared in 2003. Of these, 35 were countries that have reported first outbreaks in poultry/wild bird infection in 2006 alone, making the virus spread more aggressive than ever. Most of the countries affected fall under the migratory flyways but trade routes are also being pointed at as possible means of inter-country disease transmission.

H5N1 is of particular importance because it mutates rapidly and has a documented propensity to acquire gene from flu viruses infecting other animal species. The virus has been detected in pigs in China and this is very critical since pig flu virus can infect humans and that H5N1 may acquire the gene coding for increased infectivity in humans. Research in Vietnam has shown that the H5N1 PB2 gene, the gene responsible for increased infectivity, has already mutated and that H5N1 today is more infectious than the H5N1 that existed in 1997. The virus has also been detected in tigers, martens (a weasel-like animal) and cats. Recently, a possible case of human-to-human transmission is being investigated in Indonesia involving seven family members, of which six died.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), confirmed human infections have been tallied at 224 since 2003, of which 127 have died. In 2006 alone, 51 persons have died out of 80 infected (64-percent fatality rate).

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

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   Final Draw- July 7, 2006 (86 Mayflower St., Mandaluyong City)
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11. The 1st prize winners' store partner will get P5,000 worth of Thunderbird products in the monthly draws, and P10,000 worth of Thunderbird products in the grand draw.
12. Non-winning entries will automatically qualify for the final draw.
13. Winners will be called and/or notified via mail.
14. Promo starts March 1, 2006 and ends on June 30, 2006.

Individuals below 18 years old are not qualified to join.

Winners will be announced in Tukaan, Sundays, 12nn at IBC 13

Per DOH-BFAD Permit No. 0275 Series of 2006

What you need to know about bird flu

By Ariel V. Macasaet, DVM

THE VIRUS. Bird flu is an infection caused by Influenza Type A virus characterized by two surface proteins, Hemagglutinins (HA) and Neuraminidase (NA) which provide basis for identification. To date, there are 15 HA and 9 NA subtypes of flu viruses, of which different combinations of HA and NA proteins are possible to create a distinct subtype. All subtypes of Influenza A viruses can be found in birds.

The current outbreak of bird flu that is sweeping across three continents (Asia, Europe and Africa) has been identified as H5N1 - the same strain of Influenza A virus which jumped the bird-human species barrier in Hong Kong in 1997.

The natural incubation period (time between infection and appearance of clinical signs) is 3 to 14 days and is dose-dependent.

OCCURRENCE. Bird flu is widespread in waterfowls such as geese, ducks, swans, gulls and terns. Wild birds carry the virus in their intestines but usually do not get sick. While this virus seldom causes clinical disease in wild birds, domestic poultry flocks are particularly vulnerable with mortality reaching up to 100 percent. Migratory birds are a significant source of infection especially in countries under major flyways. However, trade routes are also important means of spreading the virus.

THREAT TO LOCAL POULTRY/GAMEFOWL INDUSTRY. With the Philippines falling under the East Asian-Australian Flyway, a large migratory route along which millions of migratory birds fly for thousand of miles between New Zealand and Siberia, the threat of infection exists since migratory birds make a regular "stop-over" in some areas to rest and feed. Local free range chickens may come in contact with these migratory birds and serve as medium for the H5N1 virus to enter our food chain. The virus could then transfer from free-range chickens to poultry farms.

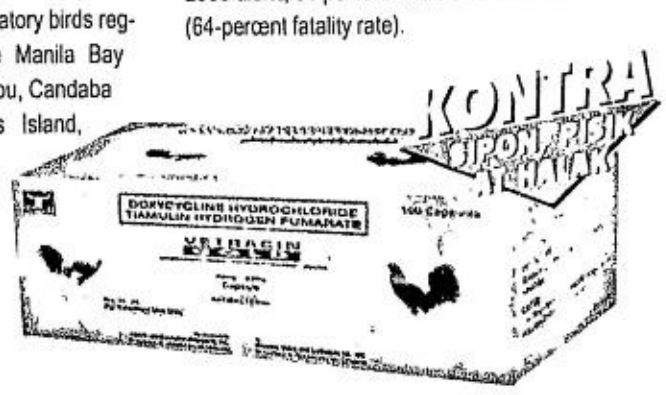
Some of the places where migratory birds regularly make a stop include the Manila Bay coastal area, Olango Island in Cebu, Candaba swamp in Pampanga, Batanes Island, Buguey Island in Cagayan Valley and the coastal wetlands of Mindanao.

CURRENT SITUATION. Bird flu outbreaks have spread like wildfire in recent months, spanning from Asia to Europe and Africa. Most of the recent outbreaks have been documented in Europe and Africa. Experts are also keeping an eye on wild bird population in Alaska— considered as a crossroad for migratory birds from Asia and Europe to America.

Based on the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) data, 52 countries have confirmed cases of H5N1 Infection in humans and poultry/wild birds since the virus reappeared in 2003. Of these, 35 were countries that have reported first outbreaks in poultry/wild bird infection in 2006 alone, making the virus spread more aggressive than ever. Most of the countries affected fall under the migratory flyways but trade routes are also being pointed at as possible means of inter-country disease transmission.

H5N1 is of particular importance because it mutates rapidly and has a documented propensity to acquire gene from flu viruses infecting other animal species. The virus has been detected in pigs in China and this is very critical since pig flu virus can infect humans and that H5N1 may acquire the gene coding for increased infectivity in humans. Research in Vietnam has shown that the H5N1 PB2 gene, the gene responsible for increased infectivity, has already mutated and that H5N1 today is more infectious than the H5N1 that existed in 1997. The virus has also been detected in tigers, martens (a weasel-like animal) and cats. Recently, a possible case of human-to-human transmission is being investigated in Indonesia involving seven family members, of which six died.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), confirmed human infections have been tallied at 224 since 2003, of which 127 have died. In 2006 alone, 51 persons have died out of 80 infected (64-percent fatality rate).



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'Radyo Sabong'
The 1st Cockpit Radio

'Radyo Sabong' has been designed to offer enthusiasts a better, more entertaining and informative experience as they enter the cockpit.

OVER THE PAST CENTURIES OF COCKfighting, the industry has grown and changed immensely in areas like high-quality feeds and gamebirds specific medicines. We have even seen the introduction of cockpits with full air-conditioning. The cockfighting industry in the country is truly innovative. In 2006, cockfighting will take another leap forward with the introduction of Thunderbird "Radyo Sabong". The first of its kind around the world, Thunderbird "Radyo Sabong" will transform the entire cockfighting experience for *sabongeros*.

"Radyo Sabong" has been designed to offer enthusiasts a better, more entertaining and informative experience as they enter the cockpit. With music and programs customized to suit the discriminating taste of cockfighting aficionados, "Radyo Sabong" is a virtual radio station installed in cockpits around the country.

Together with audioWAV, the Instore Radio Specialists, Thunderbird's quest for innovation and audioWAV's radio expertise promises at least 350 "Radyo Sabong" venues before the end of the year, starting with five pilot areas already up and running.

In the five pilot sites, "Radyo Sabong" has been received with much praise. "Radyo Sabong" provides *sabongeros* with the music they love, along with helpful tips and information for raising better, stronger fighting cocks. The pilot site owners have also enjoyed "Radyo Sabong", as it has increased the number of visitors to their cockpits.

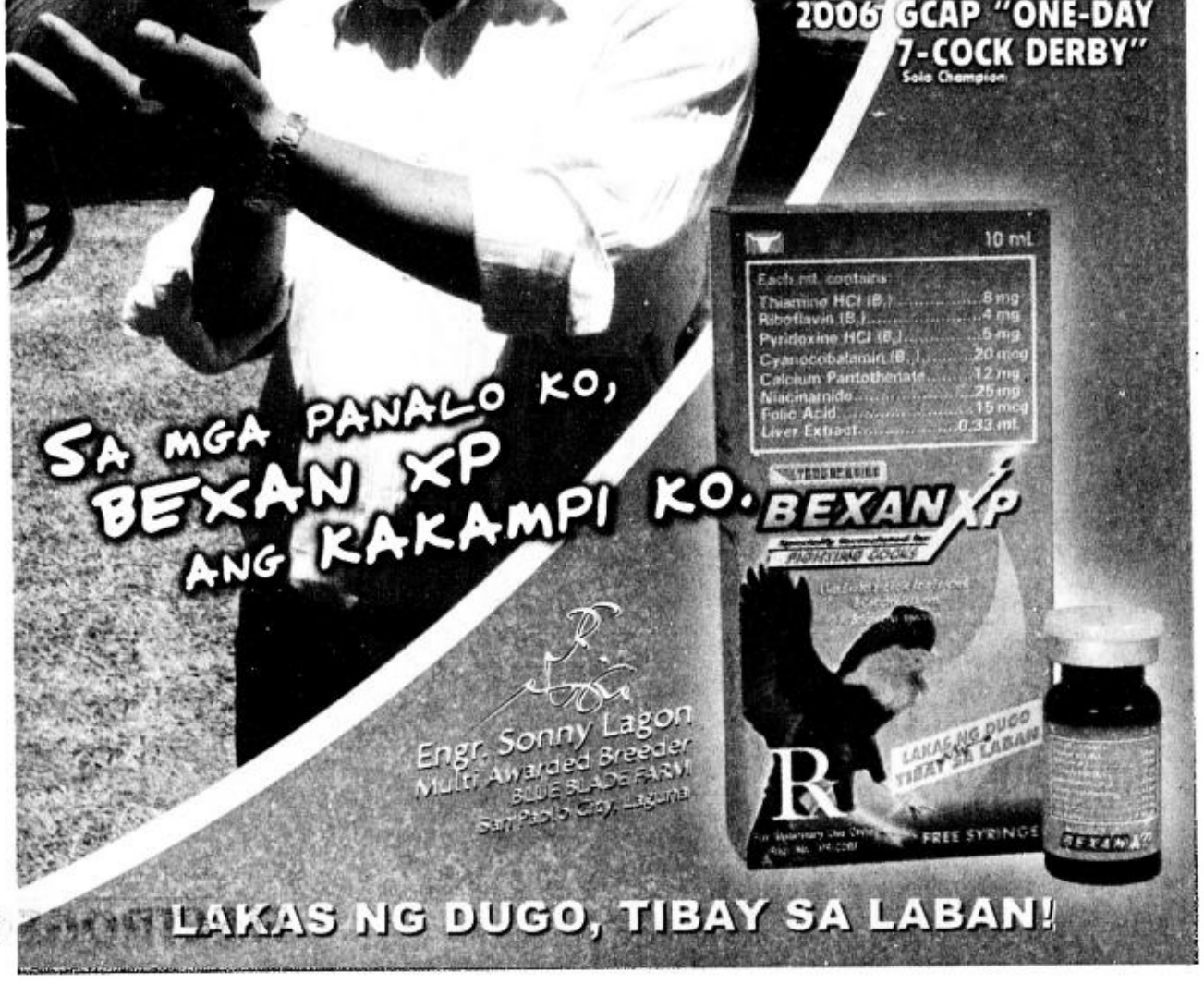
If you are interested in installing Thunderbird "Radyo Sabong" into your cockpit, please talk to your Thunderbird area representative.

An audio conditioning CD for your fighting cocks

ANYONE WHO HAS TAKEN THE TIME TO raise a fighting cock from an egg to a full stag knows that all that time, effort and care can be lost in the blink of an eye during a single cockfight. Because of this, we take the time to carefully condition our cocks with the right food, we condition them for the correct lighting, we spar them and condition them to have the right amount of "gameliness". Even with all this preparation, how many *sabongeros* have seen it all come to nothing because their cock gets distracted by the roar of the crowd just before the fight?

It is with this in mind that Thunderbird and audioWAV have created an audio conditioning CD called "Bushido". The word "Bushido", meaning "Way of the Warrior", is a Japanese code of conduct and a way of life for Samurai Warriors, where their focus is so strong, nothing could distract them from the battle at hand. The "Bushido" conditioning CD is the first of its kind designed to simulate the incredible boost in noise which happens before the cocks fight. By using this incredible conditioning tool while you spar your cocks, you can train them to keep their focus on the battle even in the noisiest of arenas.

The Bushido CD, which was recorded and produced using the expertise and state-of-the-art equipment of audioWAV, is a gold mine for hardcore cockers and its effects could easily translate to a more prepared fighting cock come fight night, thereby resulting to more victories in the game pits. The cockfights are swift and could end within seconds, that is why the "Bushido" CD is a must-own for all serious handlers or owners.



Bird flu biosecurity

By Ariel V. Macasaet, DVM

SINCE THE REEMERGENCE OF THE HIGHLY pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) caused by H5N1 virus in 2003, more than 200 million birds in 52 affected countries have died or were killed in an effort to contain the outbreak. However, new outbreaks continue to arise in Europe and Africa despite the stamping out program.

Much of the affected countries in Asia and Africa belong to the Third World countries with not enough resources to implement a stamping out program. Experts agree that the problem can be minimized if strict biosecurity is implemented. Biosecurity involves three components:

1. ISOLATION by bird proofing all poultry houses. This means enclosing the building to keep stray animals, birds and other fowls out of poultry houses. Isolation also requires raising birds according to age such that an entire group can be removed at one time (all-in, all-out). For outdoor raised chickens, access to migratory bird areas and wetlands must be restricted. As bird flu can be transmitted to other animal species, swine and poultry must not be mixed in one holding facility.

2. TRAFFIC CONTROL involves controlling personnel movement within and around the farm, as well as keeping the personnel in his designated building. Limit visitors to farm, particularly those who came from bird flu affected countries.

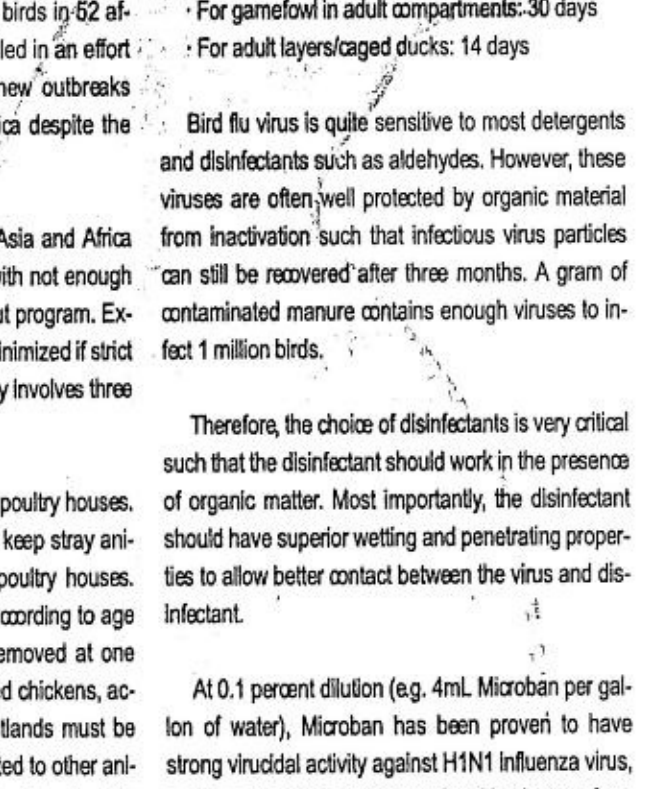
3. SANITATION requires disinfection of materials, people and equipment entering the farm and hygiene of farm personnel. Set up biosecurity control points in the farm, i.e. gates, shower rooms, footbaths, fumigation boxes to prevent entry of infected materials. Use a combination approach of cleaning first followed by the use of high-level disinfectant with proven action against the virus. Follow proper rest periods between flocks.

- For poultry (all-in, all-out): 7 days
- For gamefowl in growing houses: 14 days
- For gamefowl in adult compartments: 30 days
- For adult layers/caged ducks: 14 days

Bird flu virus is quite sensitive to most detergents and disinfectants such as aldehydes. However, these viruses are often well protected by organic material from inactivation such that infectious virus particles can still be recovered after three months. A gram of contaminated manure contains enough viruses to infect 1 million birds.

Therefore, the choice of disinfectants is very critical such that the disinfectant should work in the presence of organic matter. Most importantly, the disinfectant should have superior wetting and penetrating properties to allow better contact between the virus and disinfectant.

At 0.1 percent dilution (e.g. 4mL Microban per gallon of water), Microban has been proven to have strong virucidal activity against H1N1 influenza virus, reducing the viral population after 30 minutes of exposure in the presence of five percent organic matter and hard water. This was tested in accordance with the norm Afnor NFT 72180. Afnor is a world-renowned French standardization organization whose products and services are accredited worldwide.



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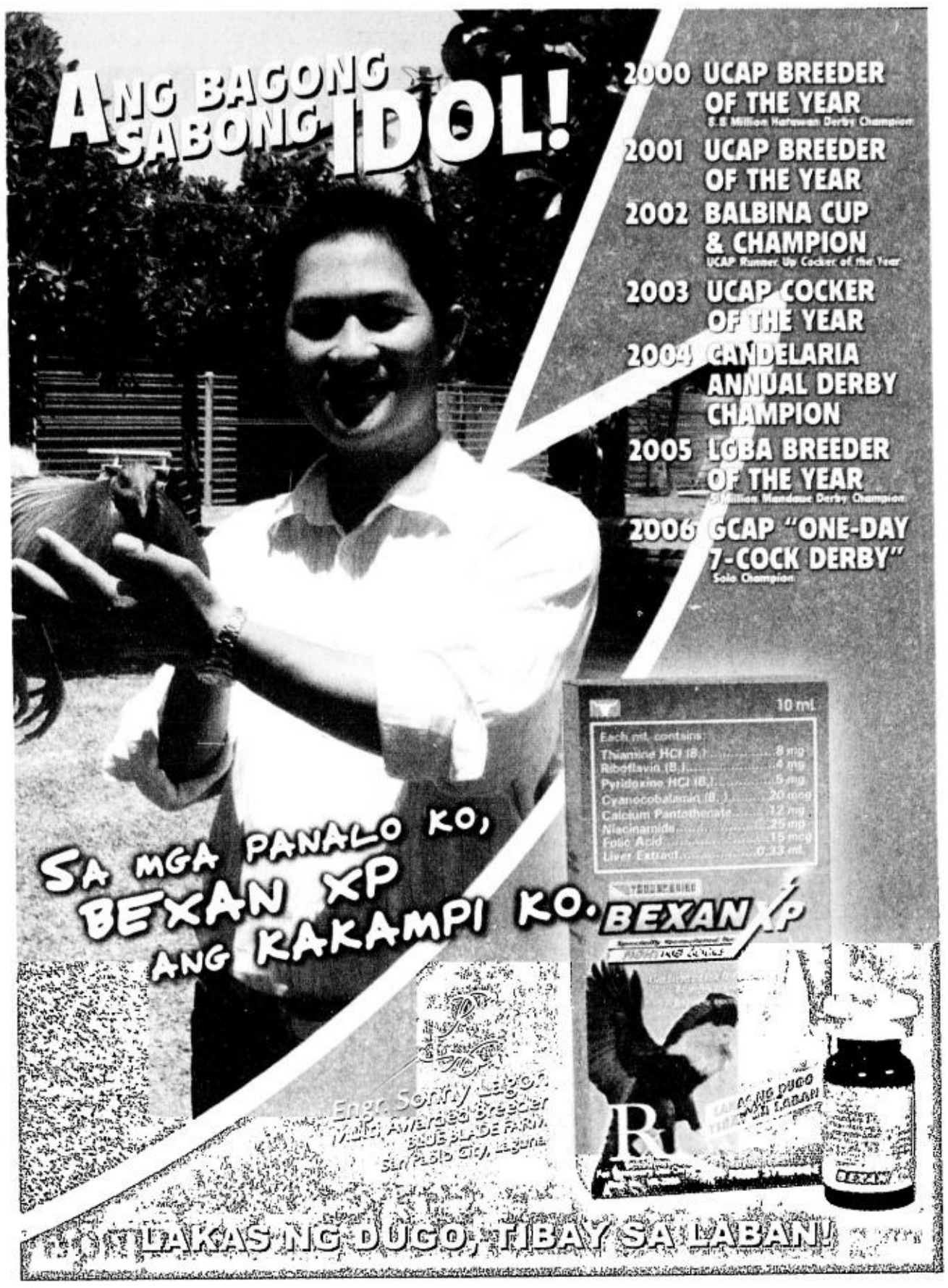

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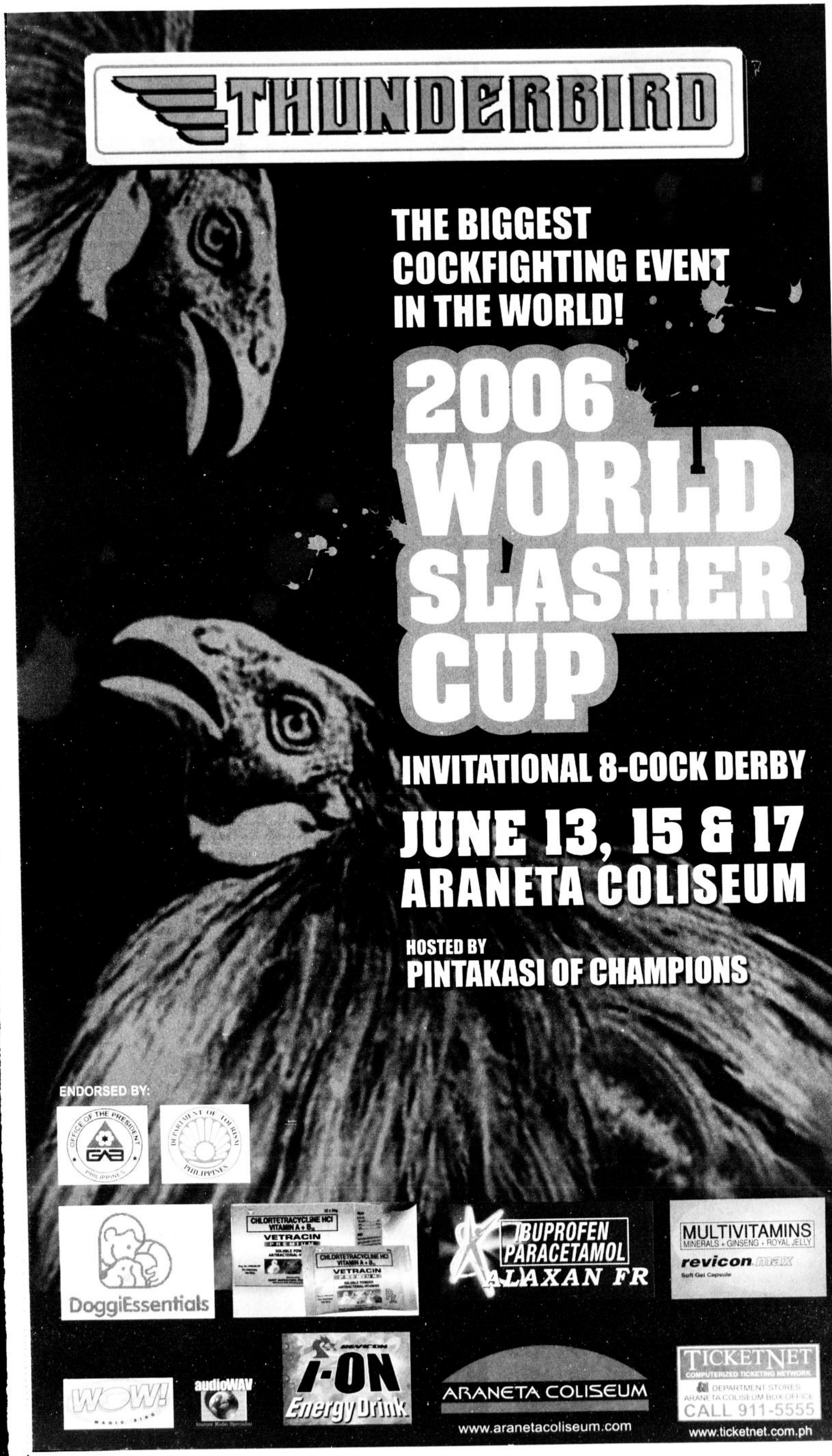
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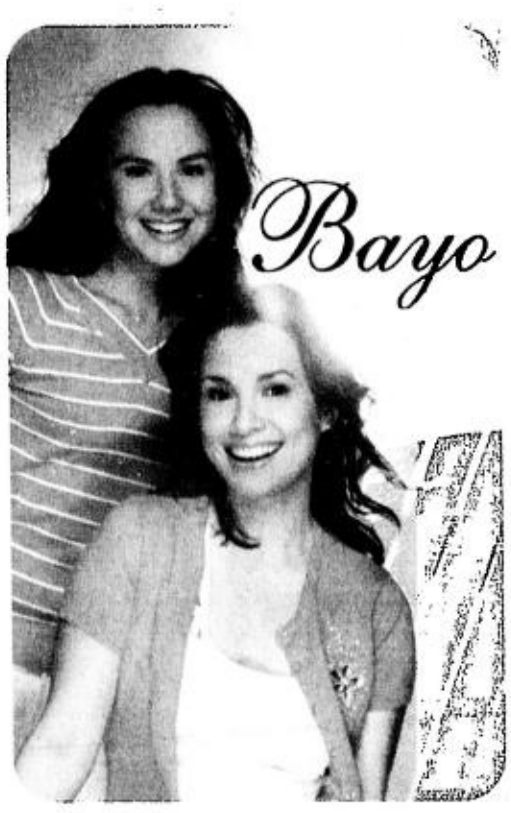

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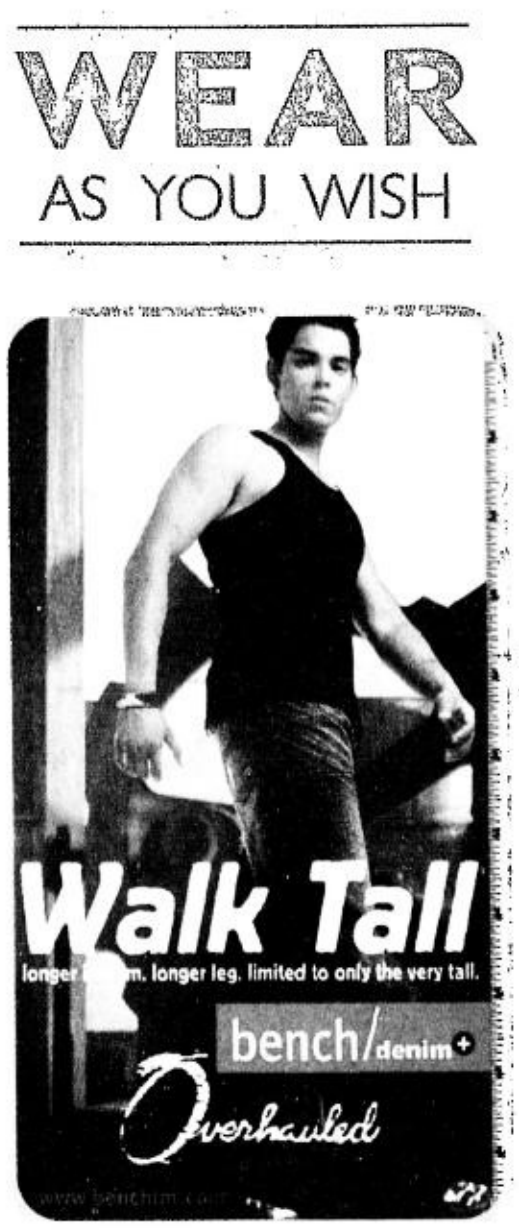

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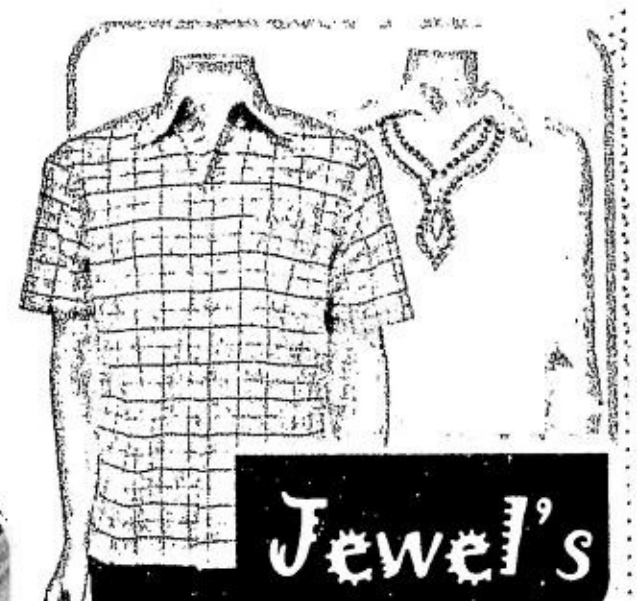

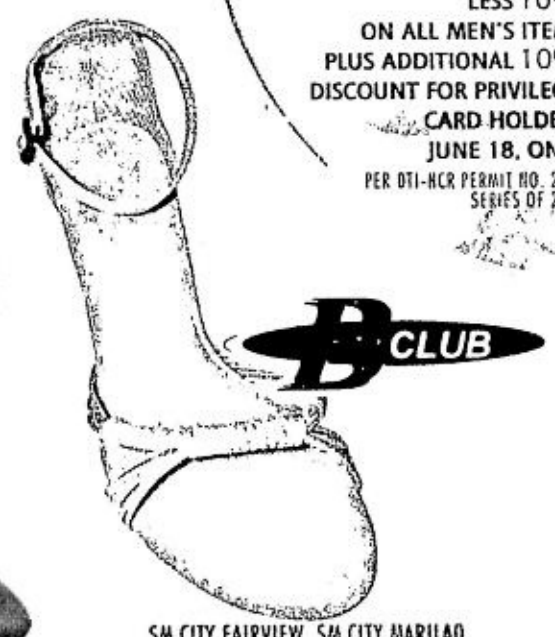

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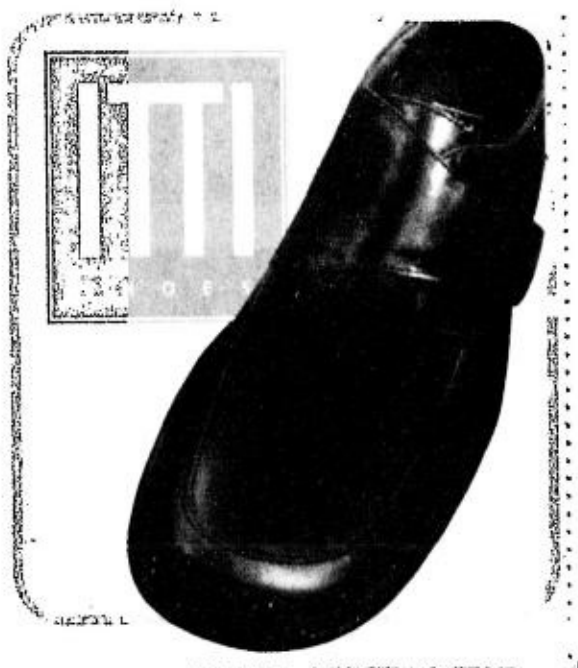

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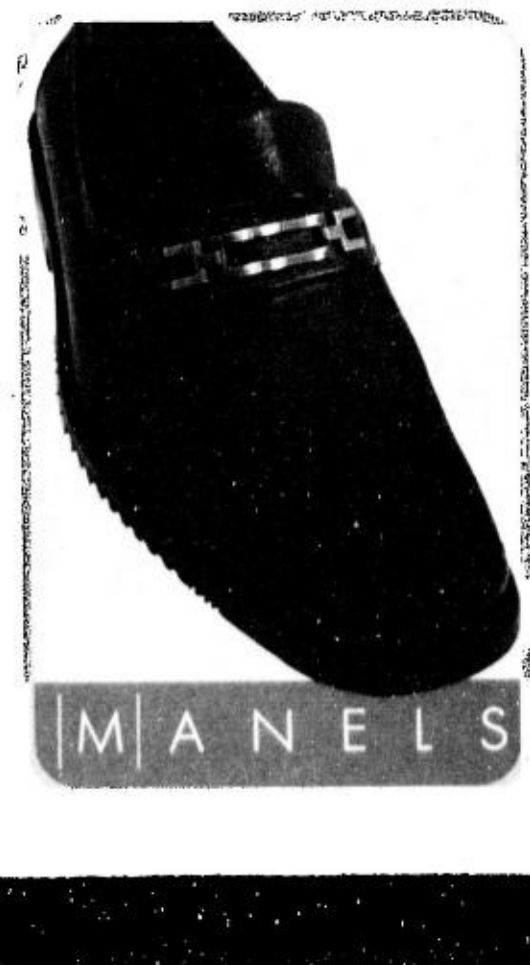

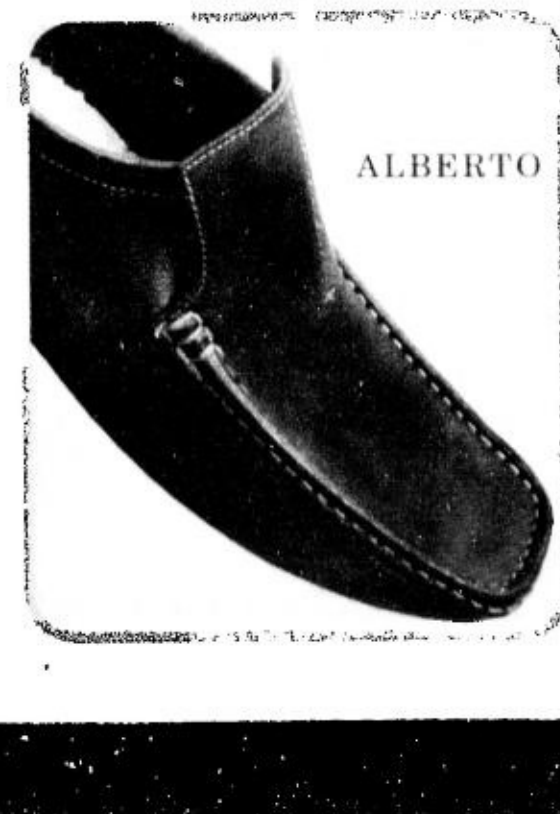

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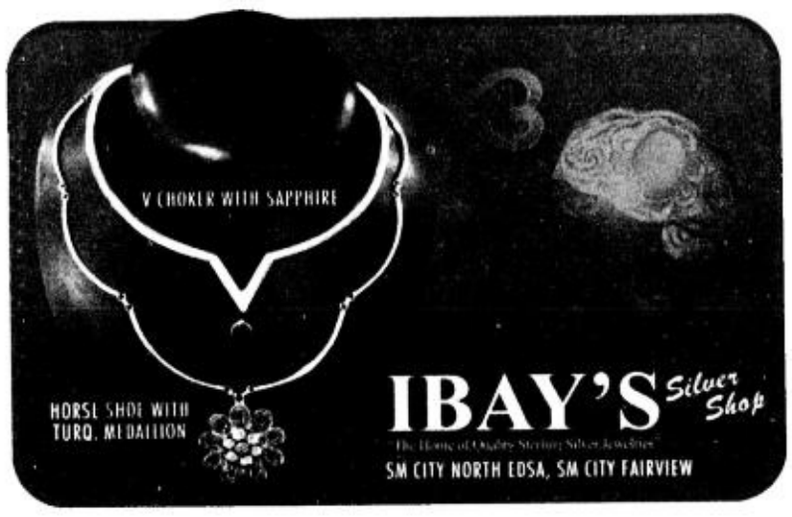

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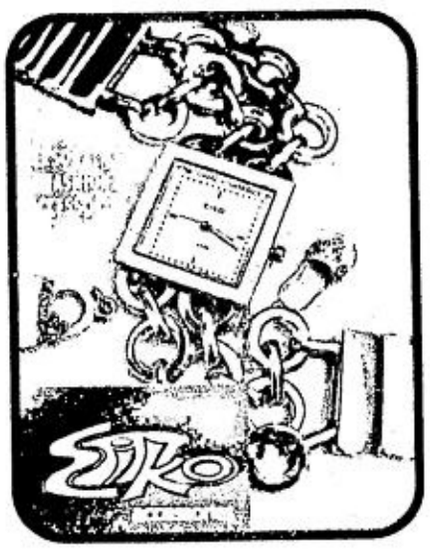

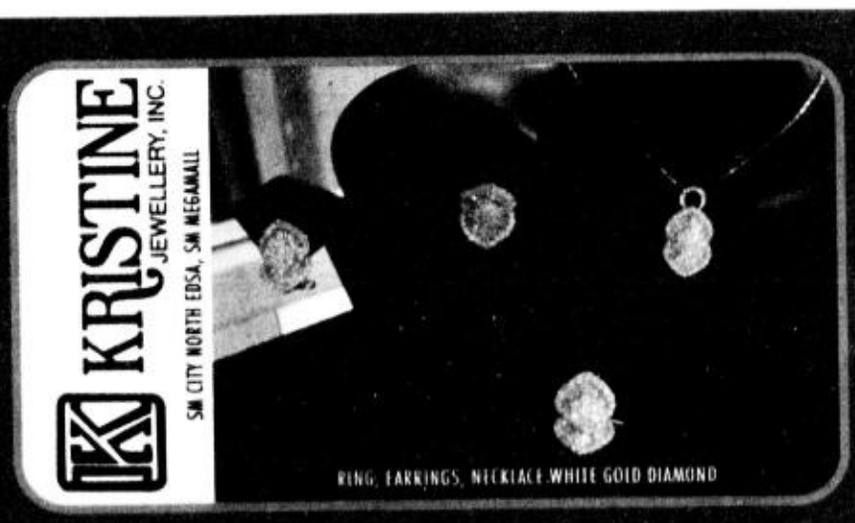

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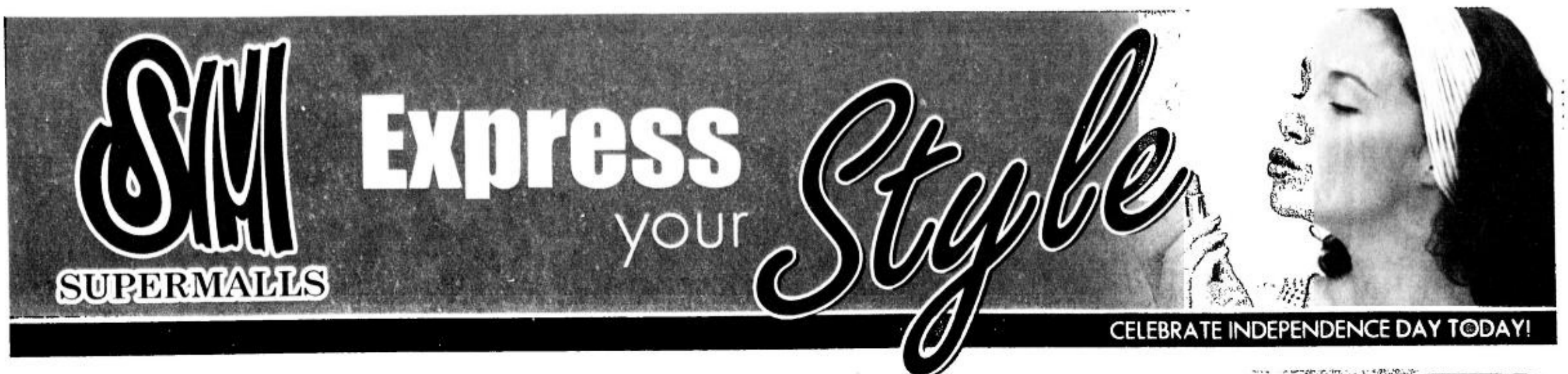
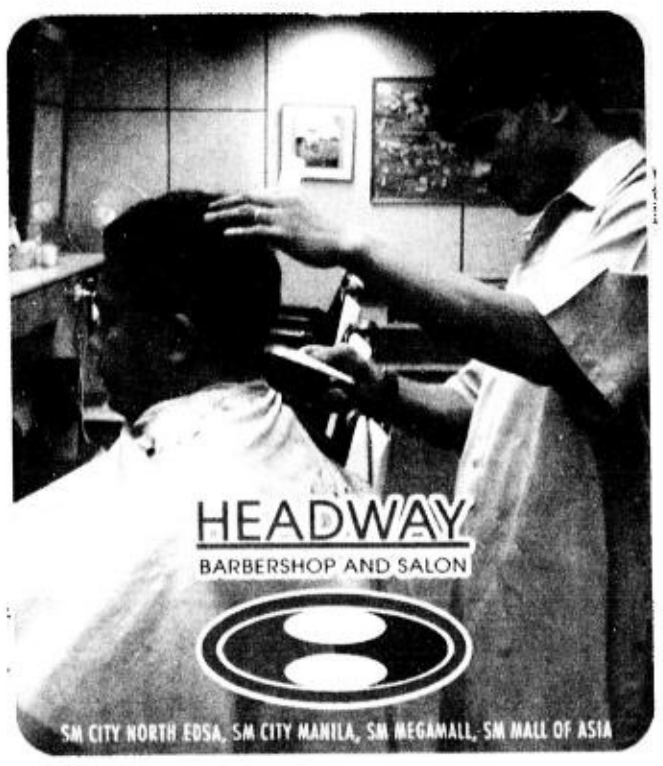
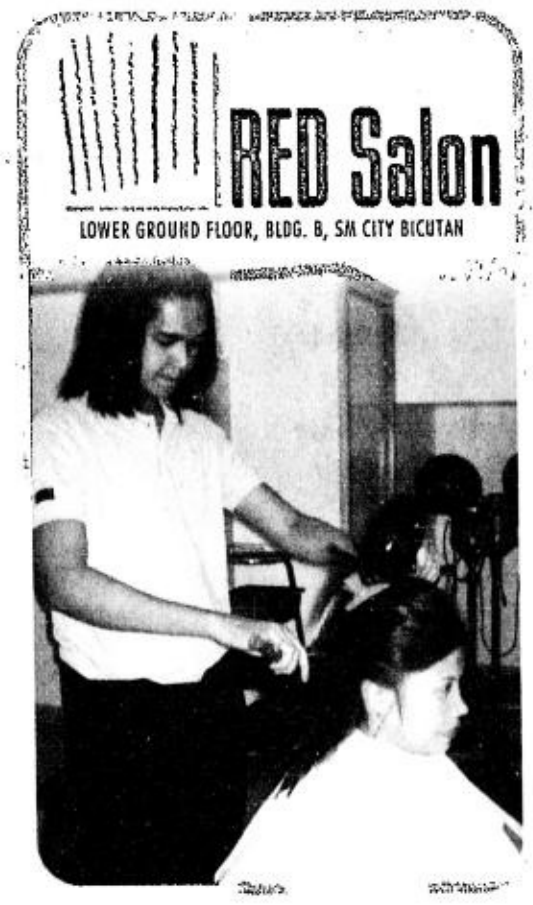
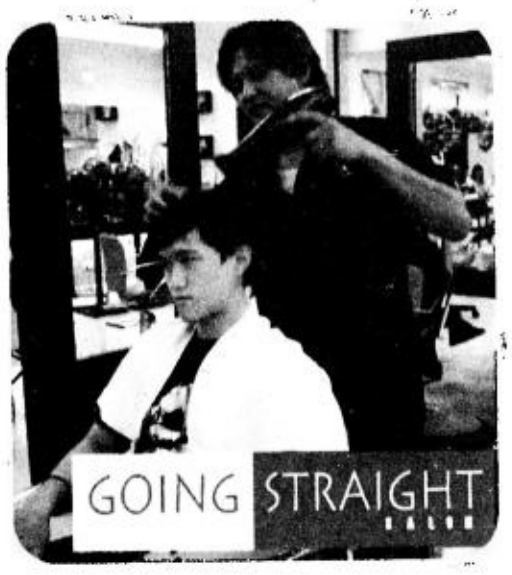


MODERN MAKEOVERS







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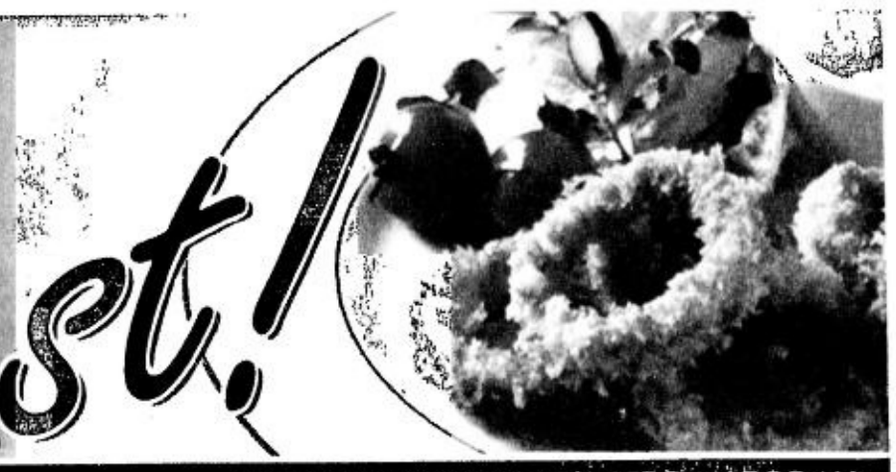

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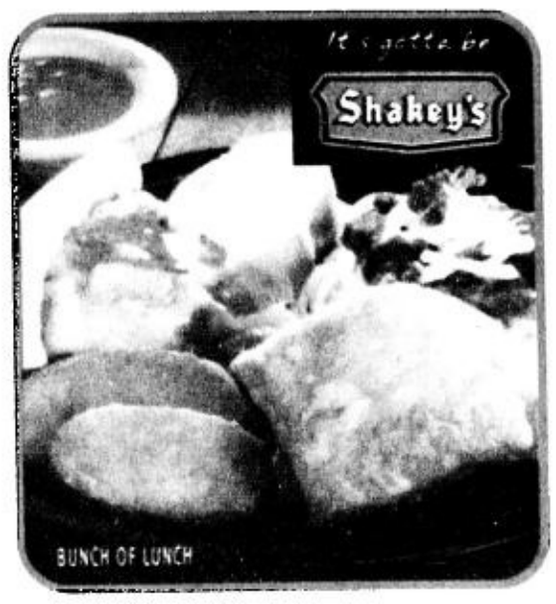

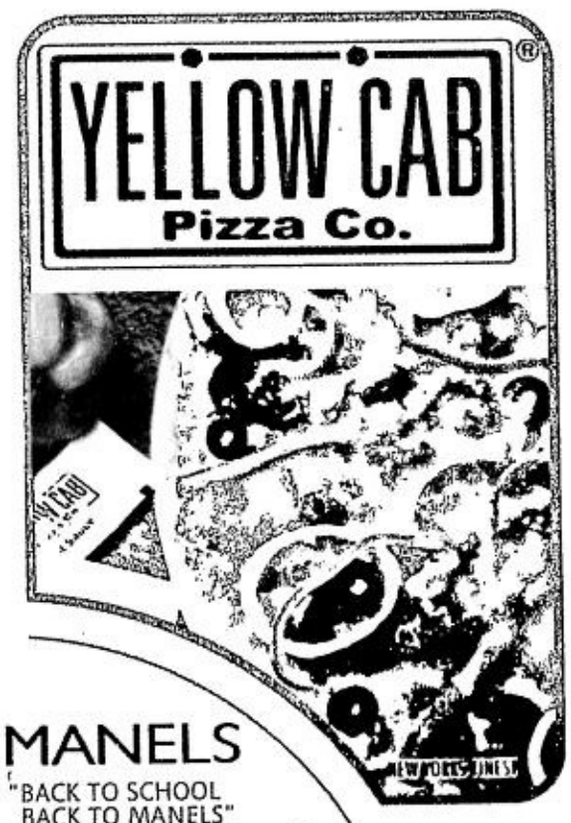

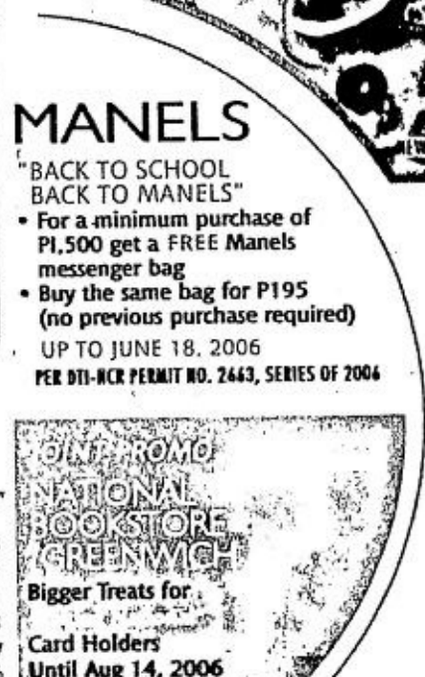

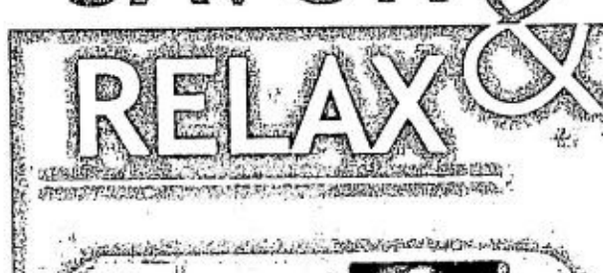

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